

## **APPENDIX A**

CEQA Environmental Initial Study

Notice of Availability for Public Review  
Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report  
By the  
Coachella Valley Conservation Commission  
For the  
La Quinta Peninsular Bighorn Sheep Barrier Project  
February 19, 2016

and

Public Scoping Meeting Summary Report  
(March 10, 2016)



**NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY FOR PUBLIC REVIEW  
NOTICE OF PREPARATION  
OF AN  
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT  
BY THE  
COACHELLA VALLEY CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
FOR THE  
LA QUINTA PENINSULAR BIGHORN SHEEP BARRIER PROJECT**

- LEAD AGENCY:** Coachella Valley Conservation Commission  
73710 Fred Waring Drive, Suite 200  
Palm Desert, California 92260  
Phone: (760) 346-1127
- CONTACT PERSON:** Katie Barrows, [kbarrows@cvag.org](mailto:kbarrows@cvag.org)  
Phone: (760) 346-1127
- PROJECT TITLE:** La Quinta Peninsular Bighorn Sheep Barrier Project
- PROJECT LOCATION:** Vicinity of Lake Cahuilla and extending north, west and south along the Santa Rosa Mountain foothills, City of La Quinta, Riverside County
- PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** The Coachella Valley Conservation Commission (CVCC) proposes the construction of a Peninsular bighorn sheep barrier (9.5± mile linear barrier) in the City of La Quinta, along the toe of slope of the Santa Rosa Mountain foothills and within portions of Sections 6, 7, 8, 17, 20 & 29, Township 6 South, Range 7 East, SBB&M in the Coachella Valley area of Riverside County. The purpose of the project is to address the urban-related impacts of Peninsular bighorn sheep (*Ovis canadensis nelsoni*) using artificial sources of food and water in urbanized lands, including golf course and resort residential areas. The species is listed “Endangered” under the Federal Endangered Species Act and as “Threatened” under the California Endangered Species Act. A variety of barrier and wildlife management alternatives are being considered to prevent Peninsular bighorn sheep from accessing golf courses and urban areas and will be evaluated in the Project Environmental Impact Report (EIR).
- FINDINGS/DETERMINATION:** The CVCC has reviewed and considered the proposed project and has determined that potentially significant impacts could result. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Report should be prepared. The USBR is also preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) for this project in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Comments made at the March 10, 2016 Public Scoping Meeting and in response to the CEQA NOP will also inform the USBR and their review process.
- PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD:** Pursuant to §15082 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines, this is to notify all interested parties that the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission (CVCC) has submitted a Notice of Preparation/Initial Study Checklist to the State Clearinghouse of their intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Report for this project. A 30-day public review period for the Notice of Preparation will commence at 8:00 a.m. on February 25, 2016 and end on March 28, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. Written comments on the Notice of Preparation must be received at the CVCC within the public review period. You may email comments to the following address: [kbarrows@cvag.org](mailto:kbarrows@cvag.org).
- AVAILABILITY OF ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS:** Copies of the Notice of Preparation, including the CEQA Initial Study, are available for review and download on the Coachella Valley MSHCP website at [www.cvmshcp.org](http://www.cvmshcp.org), at CVCC offices at the above address between the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, and at the City of La Quinta Public Library, 78275 Calle Tampico, La Quinta, CA 92253. Please call (760) 346-1127 for further information.
- PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING:** The public scoping meeting for this project will be held on Thursday, March 10, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. at the La Quinta City Hall, City Council Chambers, 78495 Calle Tampico, La Quinta, CA 92253.



## COACHELLA VALLEY CONSERVATION COMMISSION

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73-710 Fred Waring Drive, Suite 200  
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Phone: (760) 346-1127

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### ENVIRONMENTAL INITIAL STUDY

**Project Title:** La Quinta Peninsular Bighorn Sheep Barrier Project

**Project No:** NA

**Lead Agency  
Name and Address:** Coachella Valley Conservation Commission  
73-710 Fred Waring Drive, Suite 200  
Palm Desert, California 92260  
(760) 346-1127

**Applicant:** Coachella Valley Conservation Commission

**Representative:** Terra Nova Planning & Research, Inc.  
42635 Melanie Place, Suite 101  
Palm Desert, California 92211  
Phone: (760) 341-4800 Fax: (760) 341-4455

**Contact Person:  
And Phone Number:** John D. Criste, AICP  
Phone: (760) 341-4800, Fax: (760) 341-4455

**Project Location:** Vicinity of Lake Cahuilla and Extending North, West and South Along the  
Santa Rosa Mountain Foothills, City of La Quinta, Riverside County

**Coachella Valley MSHCP  
Conservation Area:** Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area

**General Plan Designations:** La Quinta General Plan:  
Open Space – Natural; Low-Density Residential; Open Space – Recreation;  
Tourist Commercial

**Zoning Designations:** La Quinta Zoning Ordinance:  
Open Space; Low Density Residential; Golf Course; Tourist Commercial; Parks  
and Recreation; Flood Plain

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This “Project” is being planned and proposed to address the urban-related impacts of Peninsular Bighorn Sheep (PBS; *Ovis canadensis nelsoni*) using artificial sources of food and water in urbanized lands, including golf course and resort residential lands, in the La Quinta area of the Coachella Valley. PBS are listed as Endangered under the federal Endangered Species Act and as Threatened under the California Endangered Species Act. Peninsular bighorn sheep are also a fully protected species in California.

In addition to full state and federal protection, this species is also a covered species under the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP). The CVMSHCP makes provisions for management actions in instances where PBS are using urbanized areas and are exposed to associated hazards. In February 2014 the state and federal Wildlife Agencies sent a letter informing the CVCC and the City of La Quinta that Peninsular bighorn sheep were regularly visiting several golf courses in the La Quinta area. This notification called for a plan of action to prevent or exclude PBS from “. . . using artificial sources of food or water in unfenced areas of existing urban Development within or near a Conservation Area.” Section 8.2.4.1 of the CVMSHCP identifies a barrier, an eight-foot fence or functional equivalent, as a management action to prevent PBS access to these areas.

The Project involves the construction of an approximately 9.5± mile barrier or functional equivalent along the mountain urban interface extending from the Quarry Golf Club to the south, north along the toe of slope west of Lake Cahuilla and the PGA West development, along the SilverRock golf course on the north, and west and south along the foothills adjacent to the Tradition (please see Exhibit 3). The subject lands are located along the toe of slope of the foothills of the Santa Rosa Mountains. They include portions of championship golf courses, high value residences, Lake Cahuilla Recreation Area and the aforementioned Coachella Branch of the All-American Canal.

A variety of barriers and other methods are being explored to prevent PBS access to urbanized areas, and the subject Project is examining possible alternatives to fencing to keep sheep from accessing the golf courses and associated developments, and the Coachella Branch Canal that bounds much of the eastern portion of the Project area. Alternative alignments are also being evaluated. The Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD) has already constructed a fence of approximately 2,976 feet adjacent to the canal, as shown in Exhibit 3, which also depicts possible alternative route alignments.

### Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the proposed Project is to prevent continuing impacts to sheep from urban-based threats associated with development adjoining sheep habitat. The Project purpose includes the development and implementation of a plan that will result in the safe and effective exclusion of PBS from adjoining urban lands described above. The purpose of the Project is also, to the extent practicable, to collect additional information on the local population of sheep and how they use and move through the subject habitat. The project is intended to examine other alternatives to a fence, including alternative barrier design and/or location, habitat enhancements, and translocation of the local ewe group.

### Statement of Need

The City of La Quinta and the Coachella Valley are located at the western edge of the Colorado Desert sub-unit of the Sonoran Desert. Peninsular Bighorn Sheep inhabit the lower elevations of the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains where they are well adapted to the harsh desert conditions. The foothills and valley floor generally support sparse vegetation, which is limited by heat and aridity. Bighorn sheep also



depend on the canyons, washes and alluvial fans emanating from the mountains, which typically support a variety of plants and animals, as water is periodically and sometimes perennially available in the larger canyons.

The Peninsular Range population includes bighorn sheep in eight known ewe groups or “sub-populations” from the San Jacinto Mountains near Palm Springs south into Baja California. Urban development along the toe of the slopes has pushed PBS out of much of their alluvial fan habitat, eliminating or restricting access to historic forage and bedding areas. Land management agencies, wildlife biologists, and communities have attempted to balance land development with the desire to protect sensitive and iconic species such as PBS.

Portions of the project area are within or near designated critical habitat for the Peninsular Bighorn Sheep. The Bighorn Sheep Recovery Plan (USFWS 2000) provides guidance for actions to protect the sheep and to enhance their chance for recovery and eventual delisting. The CVMSHCP identifies goals and objectives to maintain and enhance PBS populations through adaptive management of the species and their habitat.

Alternative barrier routes will be investigated based upon a screening process that ensures all relevant functional and safety goals are met. The potential beneficial and adverse impacts associated with barrier solutions will be fully described, including the limited or area-specific application of the barrier solution. Alternative barrier types, including vegetation, electronic barriers, and canal bridge gates will also be evaluated.

## **PROJECT LOCATION AND LIMITS**

The Project area is located along the toe of slope of the Santa Rosa Mountain foothills and within portions of Sections 6, 7, 8, 17, 20 and 29, Township 6 South, Range 7 East, SBB&M in the Coachella Valley area of the central portion of Riverside County. The Project involves and is bounded by lands and facilities of private golf course developments, lands on the mountain-side of the Coachella Branch Canal and the north and west shores of Lake Cahuilla. Most of the Project area can be found on the USGS La Quinta 7.5' Quadrangle Map.

Also see Exhibits 1, 2 and 3.

## **LAND USE AND SETTING**

- North: Residential and resort development, including golf courses, lakes, etc. Avenue 52 also occurs to the north.
- East: Residential and resort development, including golf courses, lakes, etc. Coachella Branch Canal also occurs to the immediate east. Jefferson Street occurs to the east of golf course developments.
- South: Santa Rosa Mountains and foothills
- West: Residential and resort development, including golf courses, lakes, etc. Avenida Bermudas also occurs to the west.



## 10.21.15



# CVCC Peninsular Bighorn Sheep Barrier Project Regional Location Map La Quinta, California

## Exhibit

1





Source: Google Earth, 2016



**CVCC Peninsular Bighorn Sheep Barrier Project**  
**Project Vicinity Map**  
**La Quinta, California**

**Exhibit**

**2**





Proposed Project Alignment: .....

Existing CVWD Barrier: - - - -

0 3,300 ft  
1" = 3,300 ft



0222331 65

Source: Google Earth, 2016



EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:


The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist or represents an area of concern that should be further analyzed, as indicated on the following pages.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Aesthetics	<input type="checkbox"/>	Agriculture and Forestry Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	Air Quality
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Biological Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Cultural Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	Geology /Soils
<input type="checkbox"/>	Greenhouse Gas Emissions	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hazards & Hazardous Materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hydrology / Water Quality
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Land Use / Planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mineral Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	Noise
<input type="checkbox"/>	Population / Housing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Public Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Recreation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation/Traffic	<input type="checkbox"/>	Utilities / Service Systems	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mandatory Findings of Significance

**DETERMINATION:** (To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

<input type="checkbox"/>	I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

 Signature: John D. Criste, AICP Commission Planning Consultant Coachella Valley Conservation Commission	Date: <u>2/23/16</u>
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### Environmental Checklist and Discussion:

The following checklist evaluates the proposed project's potential adverse impacts. For those environmental topics for which a potential adverse impact may exist, a discussion of the existing site environment related to the topic is presented followed by an analysis of the project's potential adverse impacts. When the project does not have any potential for adverse impacts for an environmental topic, the reasons why there are no potential adverse impacts are described.

1. AESTHETICS -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Source:** Preliminary site assessment; La Quinta General Plan 2013.

- a, c) **Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation.** The dominant visual feature in the project area is the steep, rocky slopes of the Santa Rosa Mountains, which offer highly valued viewsheds that can be seen from many locations throughout the valley. It is anticipated that the barrier will have less than significant impacts on scenic vistas when viewed from a distance. At close proximity, however, the barrier will be visible and could detract from the existing visual character of the site. The significance of impacts will depend, in part, on surrounding terrain and viewer sensitivity. Where the barrier is close to existing residential lots and golf course facilities, viewers may be more sensitive to the barrier. In less developed locations, visual impacts are expected to be less significant. Impacts will also depend on surrounding terrain, including the steepness of slopes and presence of vegetation that may shield portions of the barrier from view. Potential visual impacts, as well as alternative barrier routes and types, should be considered and further analyzed in the Project EIR.

- b) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The proposed project will be located along the toe of slope of the Santa Rosa Mountains, which is characterized by rocky outcroppings and sparse vegetation. The project is not expected to adversely impact these resources. Potential impacts should be further evaluated in the EIR.

No historic buildings occur on site, and there are no state-designated scenic highways in the project vicinity. No project-related impacts to these features will occur.

- d) **No Impact.** The project could generate minimal light or glare from construction vehicles and equipment during the construction phase, but it will be temporary and will end once the project is complete. The project area is adjacent to the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area of the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan and, therefore, will be required to comply with applicable Land Use Adjacency Guidelines pertaining to lighting. No long-term light or glare will be generated by the project.

### Mitigation Measures:

See forthcoming EIR.

### Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program:

See forthcoming EIR.

<b>2. AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES</b> -- In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Source:** La Quinta General Plan 2013; "Riverside County Important Farmland 2010" map, California Department of Conservation, Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, 2012.

- a-c) **No Impact.** The project area is designated as "Urban and Built-Up Land" and "Other Land" on the Department of Conservation Farmland maps, and there are no agricultural lands within several miles of the site. Portions of the project area are in close proximity to the Coachella Branch of the All-American Canal and Lake Cahuilla, which support agricultural irrigation activities in the eastern Coachella Valley. The project will not result in the conversion of agricultural land to non-agricultural uses, conflict with zoning for agricultural uses or Williamson Act contracts, or otherwise result in adverse impacts to farmland, the Coachella Canal, or Lake Cahuilla.

**Mitigation Measures:**

None required.

**Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program:**

None required.



<b>3. AIR QUALITY</b> – Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions, which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Sources:** SCAQMD AQMP, 2012; Coachella Valley PM<sub>10</sub> SIP, 2003; South Coast Air Quality Management District CEQA Handbook, 1993; City of La Quinta General Plan, 2013.

- a) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The proposed project is located within the Salton Sea Air Basin (SSAB), which includes Imperial County and most of the low desert areas of central Riverside County. The South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) regulates the Riverside County portion of the SSAB

Applicable air quality plans for the project include the 2012 SCAQMD Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) and the 2010 Coachella Valley PM<sub>10</sub> Maintenance Plan (CVMP). The AQMP is designed to satisfy the planning requirements of both the federal and California Clean Air Acts. It outlines strategies and measures to achieve federal and state standards for healthful air quality for all areas under SCAQMD's jurisdiction, including portions of the SSAB. The CVMP identifies additional strategies and measures to control fugitive dust specifically in the Coachella Valley.

The proposed project is expected to generate temporary, short-lived emissions from fugitive dust and vehicles and equipment during construction. Over the long-term, the project will not induce population or employment growth beyond the levels approved in the AQMP. Therefore, the proposed project will not conflict with or obstruct the implementation of the AQMP. The project is also expected to be designed and constructed in a manner consistent with the goals and policies of the La Quinta General Plan Air Quality Element, which calls for prudent measures that limit the emission of air pollutants. Impacts will be less than significant.

- b, c) **Less than Significant Impact.** An impact is potentially significant if concentration of emissions exceed the State or Federal Ambient Air Quality Standards. The two primary pollutants of concern in the Coachella Valley, including the City of La Quinta, are ozone (O<sub>3</sub>) and particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>).

Ozone (O<sub>3</sub>) is formed when byproducts of combustion react in the presence of ultraviolet sunlight. This process occurs in the atmosphere where oxides of nitrogen combine with reactive organic gases, such as hydrocarbons, in the presence of sunlight. Ozone is a pungent, colorless, toxic gas, and a common component of photochemical smog. Although also produced within the Coachella Valley, most ozone pollutants are transported by coastal air mass from the Los Angeles and Riverside/San Bernardino air

basins, thereby contributing to occasionally high ozone concentrations in the Valley. The Coachella Valley has a history of exceeding regulatory ozone standards, although the number of days and months the Federal one-hour standard is exceeded has dropped steadily over the past decade.

Particulate Matter (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>) consists of fine suspended particles of ten microns or smaller in diameter, and is the byproduct of road dust, sand, diesel soot, windstorms, and the abrasion of tires and brakes. The elderly, children and adults with pre-existing respiratory or cardiovascular disease are most susceptible to the effects of PM. Elevated PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> levels are also associated with an increase in mortality rates, respiratory infections, occurrences and severity of asthma attacks and hospital admissions. The SSAB is a non-attainment area for PM<sub>10</sub> and is classified as attainment/unclassifiable for PM<sub>2.5</sub>.

The South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD), in conjunction with the Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG), Riverside County and local jurisdictions, prepared the “2003 Coachella Valley PM<sub>10</sub> State Implementation Plan,” which includes PM<sub>10</sub> control program enhancements and requests an extension of the region’s PM<sub>10</sub> attainment date. The Coachella Valley is designated as a serious non-attainment area for PM<sub>10</sub> and is subject to the 2003 State Implementation Plan (SIP) and local dust control regulations and guidelines. A State Implementation Plan that addresses how Southern California will meet federal standards for finer particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) was adopted in 2007. The Coachella Valley is designated as unclassifiable/attainment for PM<sub>2.5</sub>.

The concerted adoption of District and local controls in the Coachella Valley resulted in this area attaining the 24-hour PM<sub>10</sub> standard by the 2006 attainment date. On January 8, 2010, the District adopted the PM<sub>10</sub> Redesignation Request and Maintenance Plan for the Coachella Valley (Coachella Valley PM<sub>10</sub> Maintenance Plan). The plan officially requests this area be redesignated to attainment for the PM<sub>10</sub> standard and charts the course for continued maintenance of the standard.

State and federal standards have been established for PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>, as well as ozone, and are shown in the table below.

**Table 1**  
**State and National Ambient Air Quality Standards**

Pollutant	State Standards		National Standards**	
	Averaging Time	Concentration	Averaging Time	Concentration
Ozone (O <sub>3</sub> )	1-hour 8-hour	0.09 ppm 0.07 ppm	1-hour 8-hour	0.070 ppm
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	1-hour 8-hour	20.0 ppm 9.0 ppm	1-hour 8-hour	35.0 ppm 9.0 ppm
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO <sub>2</sub> )	1-hour AAM	0.18 ppm 0.030 ppm	AAM	0.10 ppm* 0.053 ppm
Sulfur Dioxide (SO <sub>2</sub> )	1-hour 24-hour	0.25 ppm 0.04 ppm	1 & 24 hour AAM	.075ppm**
Particulate Matter (PM <sub>10</sub> )	24-hour AAM	50 µg/m <sup>3</sup> 20 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	24-hour AAM	150 µg/m <sup>3</sup>
Particulate Matter (PM <sub>2.5</sub> )	AAM 24-hour	12 µg/m <sup>3</sup> 35 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	AAM 24-hour	12 µg/m <sup>3</sup> 35 µg/m <sup>3</sup>
Lead	30 day Avg.	1.5 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	3 month Avg.	0.15 µg/m <sup>3</sup>
Visibility Reducing Particles	8-hour	No standard	No federal Standard	No federal Standard
Sulfates	24-hour	25µg/m <sup>3</sup>	No federal Standard	No federal Standard
Hydrogen Sulfide	1-hour	0.03 ppm	No federal Standard	No federal Standard
Vinyl Chloride	24-hour	0.01 ppm	No federal Standard	No federal Standard
Source: California Air Resources Board, 06/04/13 Notes: ppm = parts per million; ppb= parts per billion; µg/ m <sup>3</sup> = micrograms per cubic meter of air; AAM = Annual Arithmetic Mean; * Note that this standard became effective as of January 22,2010. ** Final rule signed June 2, 2010, effective as of August 23,2010				

The Coachella Valley has a history of exceeding regulatory ozone standards and is classified as a “severe-15” ozone non-attainment area under the federal Clean air Act.

For the proposed project, pollutants will be generated during the construction phase by construction vehicles and equipment, and limited ground disturbance required for barrier construction. However, impacts will be temporary and short-lived. Pollutant emissions are not expected to contribute to a significant cumulative net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is in non-attainment. Long-term impacts will be negligible, as emissions will be generated only during occasional vehicle trips to the project site for inspections and repairs. Impacts are expected to be less than significant. An assessment of potential emissions should be included in the EIR.

- d) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The nearest sensitive receptors are residences in the Tradition, PGA West, and Quarry developments. Impacts are expected to be less than significant given the short-term duration of the construction phase; however, an assessment of potential air quality impacts to sensitive receptors should be provided in the EIR.
- e) **No Impact.** The project will not generate objectionable odors that would affect a substantial number of people. No impact will occur.

**Mitigation Measures:**

See forthcoming EIR.

**Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program:**

See forthcoming EIR.

4. <b>BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES</b> -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or US Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Sources:** City of La Quinta General Plan, 2013; Biological Survey Report for the Coachella Canal Relocation - SilverRock Country Club, 2013; California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB); Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan and Natural Community Conservation Plan, 2008; "Recovery Plan for Bighorn Sheep in the Peninsular Ranges, California," U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2000; "Biological Survey Report, Coachella Canal Relocation, SilverRock Country Club, La Quinta, California," Coachella Valley Water District, October 2013.

- a) **Less than Significant With Mitigation.** The project area is located along the toe of slope of the foothills of the Santa Rosa Mountains, in which Peninsular Bighorn Sheep (PBS; *Ovis canadensis nelsoni*) have been observed and documented. PBS are listed as "Endangered" under the federal Endangered Species Act and "Threatened" under the California Endangered Species Act. The species is also covered under the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan (CV MSHCP), and the project site is immediately adjacent to the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area of the CVMSHCP (see 4.f, below).

The proposed project is planned to effectively and safely exclude PBS access to adjacent, downslope lands, which include championship golf courses, high value residences, Lake Cahuilla Recreation Area, and the Coachella Branch of the All-American Canal. During construction, the project area will be accessed by construction equipment and personnel. However, the construction phase will be temporary and short-lived, and will occur in the least disruptive manner possible. After construction, periodic inspections and occasional maintenance activity will occur over the life of the project. The project will not result in substantial changes to existing terrain, and no significant habitat modifications or direct impacts to PBS or other species are anticipated. It is expected that, with proper barrier design and temporary construction measures in place, project impacts will be less than significant.

A project-specific biological survey will be conducted to determine the extent to which the project may affect sensitive species. Members of the public have expressed concerns about the impact of a fence or other barrier which would prevent bighorn sheep from using food and water sources in urban areas during periods of drought. The Program EIR should analyze potential impacts to PBS and other special-status species, and set forth appropriate mitigation measures, if necessary, to minimize potential impacts.

- b) **Less than Significant Impact.** The project area includes several drainages that emanate from higher elevations of the Santa Rosa Mountains, some of which may contain riparian habitat and sensitive natural communities. However, project impacts are expected to be less than significant. The project-specific biological survey and Program EIR should further evaluate potential impacts to riparian habitat and sensitive natural communities and, if necessary, identify appropriate mitigation measures.
- c) **No Impact.** The project area does not contain federally protected wetlands, vernal pools, marshes, or coastal waters, and the project will not result in the dredging, fill, or alteration of protected waters. No impact will occur.
- d) **Potentially Significant Impact.** PBS use of urbanized areas in the project area has been well documented, and in some cases, has led to sickness, injury, and death among PBS. PBS use of golf courses and urban areas does not constitute a natural migratory movement corridor for the species. The proposed project will exclude PBS access to development along the 9.5± mile route and is expected to have a net positive impact on the protection of this species. The project is not expected to impede the use of nursery sites, which are typically located at elevations higher than the proposed barrier. The project is not expected to significantly interfere with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or bird species. However, the barrier could limit the movement of certain wildlife species that are too large to penetrate the barrier. Potential impacts to wildlife movement or access to nursery sites should be further evaluated in the site-specific biological survey and the EIR.
- e) **No Impact.** The proposed project will not conflict with any city or county policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance.
- f) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The project will not conflict with the provisions of the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan and Natural Community Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP) or any other adopted conservation plans. The project is within the coverage area of the CVMSHCP, a comprehensive regional plan encompassing approximately 1.1 million acres that will conserve approximately 240,000 acres of open space. The Plan addresses the conservation needs of a variety of plant and animal species and natural vegetation communities in the Coachella Valley region, including the Peninsular Bighorn Sheep. It was finalized in October 2008 and establishes a system of preserves outside of urbanized areas to protect lands with high conservation value.

The project area is adjacent to the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area of the CVMSHCP and, therefore, will be subject to the Land Use Adjacency Guidelines set forth in the Plan. The project is consistent with Land Use Adjacency Guideline 4.5.6, which recommends that land uses adjacent to or within a Conservation Area incorporate barriers, which can include fencing, to minimize the edge effects of development on the Conservation Area.

The project is also consistent with the Recovery Plan for the PBS, which was approved in 2000 by the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service for the purpose of “securing and managing habitat in order to alleviate threats” to the species. The Recovery Plan was also signed by state agencies, including the California Department of Fish and Game and California Department of Parks and Recreation. The proposed project is consistent with the Plan’s Recommended Conservation Guidelines, which include construction of an 8-foot high fence that separates bighorn sheep from urbanized areas (p. 218). Project-related impacts to adopted conservation plans will be less than significant.

**Mitigation Measures:**

See forthcoming EIR.

**Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program:**

See forthcoming EIR.

5. CULTURAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Sources:** La Quinta General Plan, 2013; “Class III Cultural Resources Assessment for the Canal Water Conveyance System Relocation Project, Riverside County, California,” Applied EarthWorks, Inc., September 2013; “A Phase I Cultural Resource Investigation of ‘The Ranch’ Project Area Located in the Community of La Quinta, California,” McKenna et. al., September 12, 1999.

- a) **Less Than Significant Impact.** A portion of the proposed project is in close proximity to the Coachella Canal, which transports imported Colorado River irrigation water from the All-American Canal to Lake Cahuilla. The Canal was built between 1935 and 1948. The original concrete-lined section of the Old Coachella Canal has been previously recommended as eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and the California Register of Historical Resources as a model of canal construction during the 1930s and 1940s. Although the proposed project will not directly impact the Canal, the Program EIR should further evaluate potential project-related impacts. No other historic features are known to occur in the project area and, therefore, no impacts are anticipated.
- b, d) **Less Than Significant With Mitigation.** The Cahuilla were among the earliest Native American inhabitants of the Coachella Valley, and they are known to have occupied land near ancient Lake Cahuilla and the foothills of the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains. Numerous archaeological resources, including pottery scatters, habitation sites, and petroglyph-style rock art, have been identified and recorded in the project area. In several instances, human remains have been discovered. Ground-disturbing activities of the proposed project are expected to occur in the least disruptive manner possible; however, given its proximity to previously documented sites, the Program EIR should include analysis of archaeological resources in the project area, potential project-related impacts, and appropriate mitigation measures, if any.
- c) **Less Than Significant With Mitigation.** The project site is located at the base of the Santa Rosa Mountains, in close proximity to the historic high water shoreline mark of ancient Lake Cahuilla. The lake underwent periods of inundation and recession in the lower Coachella Valley, and left behind fossilized sediments and shells in parts of the City. In the project vicinity, the granitic rock of the Santa Rosa Mountains has a low paleontological sensitivity, the valley floor has a high level of sensitivity, and the sensitivity level near the Cove is undetermined (La Quinta General Plan Exhibit III-5). Potential project-related impacts should be further evaluated in the Program EIR.

#### Recommended Minimization Measures

- A. Upon the uncovering or other discovery of artifacts or cultural resources during construction activities associated with the project’s development, all disturbance activities in the vicinity of the find shall be halted, and a qualified archaeologist shall be called to the site to identify the resource and recommend mitigation in the event of the resource’s cultural significance.

- B. In the event of human remains being discovered during project development, the State of California requires a coroner be contacted and all activities cease to assure proper disposal.

**Mitigation Measures:**

See forthcoming EIR.

**Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program:**

See forthcoming EIR.

6. GEOLOGY AND SOILS -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv) Landslides?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Sources:** La Quinta General Plan 2013; project materials; City of La Quinta Engineering Bulletin #09-03, June 18, 2010.

- a) i. **No Impact.** The project area is not located within an Alquist-Priolo Fault Zone, and no active or potentially active fault runs through the project vicinity. Therefore, there will be no impacts associated with fault rupture on the project site.



- ii. **Less than Significant Impact.** The City of Quinta is located across the boundary of the Colorado Desert and Peninsula Ranges Provinces that include low-lying basins, northwest-trending valleys and mountain ranges. There are numerous earthquake-producing faults in this region, including the San Andreas Fault Zone (including the San Geronimo Pass Thrust Fault), San Jacinto Fault Zone, Pinto Mountain Fault, faults in the Eastern California Shear Zone (including the Burnt Mountain, Eureka Peak, and Pisgah-Bullion Mountain-Mesquite Lake faults), and the Elsinore Fault. The nearest fault to the project area is the San Andreas Fault, located approximately 10 miles to the northeast and capable of generating magnitude 7.4 earthquakes.

In the event of a strong seismic event, the proposed barrier could be damaged, and repairs may be required. The barrier will be located at a sufficient distance from nearby residences and other infrastructure such that any damage would not be expected to significantly impact surrounding properties. The project will not result in the construction of any structures intended for human occupation and, therefore, will not increase exposure of people to risks associated with strong seismic ground shaking. Impacts are expected to be less than significant.

- iii. **Less than Significant Impact.** The majority of the project site is located in an area of low liquefaction susceptibility. However, that portion near PGA West has a moderate liquefaction susceptibility due to a combination of youthful, unconsolidated sediments and a historically shallow groundwater table that is 30 to 50 feet below the ground surface. Although the proposed barrier could sustain damage from liquefaction in limited locations, impacts are not expected to be significant. The project will not expose people or buildings to significant hazards associated with seismic-related ground failure.

- iv. **Less than Significant Impact.** Given its location along the toe of slope of the Santa Rosa Mountains, the project area has a moderate to high susceptibility to slope instability. The proposed barrier could be damaged or destroyed in some locations in the event of a landslide or rock fall. However, the project will not result in the construction of buildings or major improvements that would substantially increase risks to people, and the proposed barrier will be located at a sufficient distance from nearby structures such that significant property damage is not anticipated. Potential project-related impacts will be less than significant.

- b) **Less than Significant Impact.** The project site is located in an area with clay, sand, gravel and crystalline rocks (Q1/Qa, Qf, Qd). Clay (Q1) is a lacustrine deposit that has low potential collapse in this area. Sand (Qa) and gravel (Qf) are relatively young and are more susceptible to erosion (wind/water) or shaking during earthquake. Quartz diorite (Qd) is a hard crystalline rock, which is highly durable, and its deposits cannot be excavated easily.

Construction of the proposed barrier is expected to result in limited disturbance of surface soils. Nonetheless, the majority of the project area is highly or very highly susceptible to wind erosion. Impacts are expected to be less than significant; however, they should be further analyzed in the EIR.

- c) **Less Than Significant With Mitigation.** The project site extends along the toe of slope of the Santa Rosa Mountains, and it is vulnerable to the effects of slope failure during an earthquake. The Santa Rosa Mountains are mainly composed of Quartz Diorite (crystalline rocks, Qd), a hard rock and durable rock. Barrier construction could destabilize fractured rocky slopes if not properly sited and constructed.

The Coachella Valley Water District and U.S. Geological Survey have documented regional subsidence in the lower Coachella Valley, including the City of La Quinta. Portions of the subsidence area are in close proximity to the project area. The proposed project will not result in the construction of any buildings, structures, or major utility improvements that could sustain significant damage or pose significant human risks associated with settlement, and project-related impacts are expected to be less than significant with the application of appropriate mitigation measures. These issues should be further addressed in the EIR.

- d) **No Impact.** The proposed project will not require connection to the sewer system or construction of a septic system. No impacts associated with soils or wastewater disposal systems will occur.

**Mitigation Measures:**

See forthcoming EIR.

**Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program:**

See forthcoming EIR.

7. <b>GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS</b> -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Source:** SCAQMD AQMP, 2012; Coachella Valley PM<sub>10</sub> SIP, 2003; South Coast Air Quality Management District CEQA Handbook, 1993; La Quinta Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan, 2013.

- a) **Less than Significant Impact.** The proposed project will generate a very limited amount of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions during construction. Construction related emissions will be generated by construction vehicles and equipment that burns fossil fuels. Impacts will be temporary and will end once construction is complete. No GHGs are expected to be generated over the long-term life of the project, other than those emitted by vehicles during occasional inspections and repairs. Project-related impacts are expected to be less than significant. Nonetheless, they should be further discussed in the EIR.
- b) **Less than Significant Impact.** The State of California has taken a leading role to curb GHG emissions, and has developed new laws and regulations to reduce these emissions. California SB 375, in part, implements greenhouse gas reduction targets set forth in AB 32. It encourages regional land use planning to reduce vehicle miles traveled and requires jurisdictions to adopt a sustainable communities strategy. The California Air Resources Board is continuing to draft regulations to implement the Scoping Plan. Senate Bill 2X requires that by the year 2020, 33% of the electricity used in California is from renewables, to help reduce GHG emissions in the State. The proposed project is expected to have a less than significant impact from the emission of GHG's and will not conflict with any plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases. Nonetheless, these issues should be addressed in the EIR.

**Mitigation Measures:**

See forthcoming EIR.

**Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program:**

See forthcoming EIR.

8. <b>HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS</b> -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Source:** City of La Quinta General Plan, 2013; "Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones in Local Responsibility Areas (map)," CALFire, December 24, 2009; Envirostor database, California Department of Toxic Substances Control, accessed October 2015.

- a-b) **No Impact.** The proposed project will not generate a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials. Neither construction nor routine inspection or repairs of the barrier are anticipated to result in the use or generation of hazardous materials. No impacts will occur.
- c) **No Impact.** The project area is not located within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school, and the project will not generate or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste. No impact will occur.
- d) **No Impact.** The project site is not located on the list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5; therefore, it would not create a significance hazard to the public or the environment. No impacts are expected.
- e, f) **No impact.** The project site is not located within an airport land use plan and will not result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area. The subject site is approximately 4.5 miles south of the Bermuda Dunes Airport and approximately 6 miles west of the Jacqueline Cochran Regional Airport. Therefore, no impact is expected.

The project area is not located within the vicinity of a private airstrip that would result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area. No impact is expected.

- g) **No Impact.** The proposed project will be built along the toe of slope of the Santa Rosa Mountains on land which is generally inaccessible by public or private roads and not an integral part of an emergency response or evacuation plan. Access to the proposed barrier will only be required during construction and occasional inspections or repairs, and will be taken from adjoining and largely undeveloped lands, including access roads for the existing Coachella Branch Canal and Lake Cahuilla Recreation Area. No adverse impacts will occur.
- h) **Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation.** The proposed project will be built along the wildland-urban interface between the slopes of the Santa Rosa Mountains and resort residential development on the valley floor. The project will not create habitable structures that would increase wildfire risks to people. However, portions of the mountains upslope of the project site are designated by CalFire as “very high fire hazard severity zones” under state and federal responsibility. In the event of a wildland fire in the Santa Rosa Mountains in the project vicinity, the project could physically restrict access for emergency personnel trying to reach the mountains from the valley floor. This possibility is addressed in Section 14 (Public Services) of this Initial Study and should be further addressed in the EIR.

**Mitigation Measures:**

See forthcoming EIR.

**Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program:**

See forthcoming EIR.

9. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner, which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner, which would result in flooding on- or off-site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures, which would impede or redirect flood flows?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Source:** City of La Quinta General Plan, 2013.

- a) **Less than Significant Impact.** The proposed barrier route will cross portions of drainages emanating from the Santa Rosa Mountains. Construction activities associated with this project could conceivably generate or discharge contaminants into the adjoining canal or adversely impact water quality. However, the potential for this to occur is considered to be less than significant
- b) **Less than Significant Impact.** Limited quantities of water may be required for dust control measures during the construction phase. The Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD) provides water to the project area, and the primary source of water is groundwater extracted from wells. Although regional groundwater basins have a history of overdraft conditions, in which more water is extracted than is contained in the aquifer, it is anticipated that the water demanded by the proposed project will be minimal and will have a negligible impact on groundwater resources. The project EIR should analyze potential water demand associated with the proposed project.

- c, d) **Less than Significant Impact.** In some locations, the project will cross natural drainages emanating from the mountains. However, the project does not involve the construction of hardscape surfaces or structures that would increase or alter the amount of runoff generated onsite. With thoughtful barrier design, impacts are expected to be less than significant. These issues should be further addressed in the project EIR.
- e) **No Impact.** The proposed project does not include buildings, hardscape surfaces, or other improvements that will create or contribute additional runoff. No impact to existing or planned stormwater drainage systems is anticipated.
- f) **No Impact.** As described in 9.a, above, the project will not generate any runoff or otherwise degrade water quality.
- g) **No Impact.** The proposed project will not result in the development of housing either within or outside a 100-year flood plain.
- h) **Less than Significant Impact.** A portion of the project area between Lake Cahuilla and The Quarry is part of Dike No. 2, which was constructed to protect agricultural and developed areas from mountain runoff. It is designated as a 100-year floodplain in the General Plan. The proposed barrier may cross portions of this area; however, it is not expected to impede or redirect flows. Potential impacts should be further analyzed in the EIR.
- i-j) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The proposed barrier route is in close proximity to the Coachella Branch Canal and Lake Cahuilla, which hold significant volumes of water. Additionally, two CVWD water reservoirs are upslope of the proposed route, northwest of Lake Cahuilla. These structures could be susceptible to seismically induced seiche, an occasional or sudden oscillation in a body of water, during a strong earthquake. Construction workers, inspectors, and repairmen could be exposed temporarily to hazards associated with such an event; however, risks are considered less than significant. The subject property is not susceptible to tsunami given its inland location.

**Mitigation Measures:**

See forthcoming EIR.

**Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program:**

See forthcoming EIR.

10. <b>LAND USE AND PLANNING</b> - Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Physically divide an established community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Source:** La Quinta General Plan 2013; La Quinta Official Zoning Map; Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan, 2008; "Recovery Plan for Bighorn Sheep in the Peninsular Ranges, California," U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2000.

a) **No Impact.** The project will create a barrier that restricts PBS access to the valley floor. It will be located on the toe of slope along the urban-mountain interface, above which is undeveloped open space and below which is primarily golf course and resort residential development. It will not physically divide an established community, and no impact will occur.

b) **Less than Significant Impact.**

La Quinta General Plan

General Plan designations in the project area include:

- 1) *Open Space – Natural* in the Santa Rosa Mountains, Lake Cahuilla Recreation Area, and Coachella Canal;
- 2) *Low-Density Residential* (up to 4 dwelling units/acre) in the residential portions of Tradition, PGA West, and The Quarry;
- 3) *Open Space – Recreation* in the golf course portions of Tradition, Silver Rock, PGA West, and The Quarry; and,
- 4) *Tourist Commercial* in the west-central portion of SilverRock.

The project is consistent with the following General Plan goals, policies, and programs:

- 1) *Goal BIO-1* – The protection and preservation of native and environmentally significant biological resources and their habitats.
- 2) *Policy BIO-1.1* – Continue to implement the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP).
- 3) *Policy BIO-1.7* – Sensitive habitat areas, including conservation areas for the MSHCP, should be buffered from urban development to the greatest extent possible.
- 4) *Goal OS-1* – Preservation, conservation and management of the City's open space lands and resources for enhanced recreational, environmental and economic purposes.
- 5) *Goal OS-2* – Good stewardship of natural open space and preservation of open space areas.
- 6) *Program OS-2.1.a* – Continue to implement the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan.

La Quinta Zoning Ordinance

Zoning designations in the project area include:

- 1) *Open Space* in the Santa Rosa Mountains;
- 2) *Low Density Residential* in the residential portions of Tradition, PGA West, and The Quarry;

- 3) *Golf Course* in the golf course portions of Tradition, SilverRock, PGA West, and The Quarry;
- 4) *Tourist Commercial* in the west-central portion of SilverRock;
- 5) *Parks and Recreation* in Lake Cahuilla Recreation Area; and
- 6) *Flood Plain* in the Coachella Canal and Lake Cahuilla.

The proposed project will be located along the urban-mountain interface. It will create a barrier between natural open spaces and developed urban lands for the purpose of better preserving the habitat of and minimizing hazards to Peninsular Bighorn Sheep. The project is consistent with the above-referenced General Plan goals, policies, and programs, and will continue to implement the CV MSHCP and buffer sensitive habitat areas from urban development. It will be built in the least disruptive manner possible, will not alter existing or planned land uses, and will not significantly alter existing natural features or land forms. Project-related impacts are expected to be less than significant; however, they be further evaluated in the EIR.

c) **Less Than Significant Impact.**

Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan

The proposed project is within the coverage area of the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP), a comprehensive regional plan encompassing a planning area of approximately 1.1 million acres and conserving approximately 240,000 acres of open space. The Plan is intended to address the conservation needs of a variety of plant and animal species and natural vegetation communities that occur in the Coachella Valley region, including the Peninsular Bighorn Sheep. The CVMSHCP was finalized in October 2008 and establishes a system of preserves outside of urbanized areas in the valley to protect lands with high conservation value.

The proposed project is consistent with CVMSHCP goals, objectives, and the Mitigation and Monitoring Program for PBS. The project site is adjacent to the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area and, therefore, will be subject to the Land Use Adjacency Guidelines provided in the CVMSHCP. The project is consistent with Land Use Adjacency Guideline 4.5.6, which recommends that land uses adjacent to or within a Conservation Area incorporate barriers, which can include fencing, to minimize the edge effects of development on the Conservation Area.

Recovery Plan for the Peninsular Bighorn Sheep

The Recovery Plan for the PBS was approved in 2000 by the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service for the purpose of “securing and managing habitat in order to alleviate threats” to the species. The proposed project is consistent with the Plan’s Recommended Conservation Guidelines, which include construction of an 8-foot high chain-link fence that separates bighorn sheep from urbanized areas (p. 218).

Summary of Impacts

The project will implement the species conservation guidelines pertaining to construction of a PBS barrier, as recommended in the CVMSHCP and Recovery Plan, and consistent with City of La Quinta General Plan policies. The project is not expected to adversely affect designated critical habitat for the PBS. The project will be required to comply with the Land Use Adjacency Guidelines set forth in the CVMSHCP, which will assure potential project-related impacts are less than significant. These issues should be further evaluated in the Program EIR.

**Mitigation Measures:**

See forthcoming EIR.

**Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program:**

See forthcoming EIR.



11. MINERAL RESOURCES -- Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Source:** La Quinta General Plan, 2013; "Mineral Land Classification: Aggregate Materials in the Palm Springs Production-Consumption Region", prepared by California Department of Conservation-Division of Mines and Geology, 1988; Soils Survey of Riverside County, California, Coachella Valley Area," U.S. Soil Conservation Survey, September, 1980.

- a, b) **No Impact.** The subject property is located on Quartz Diorite (Qd), alluvial sand and clay (Ql/Qa), and alluvial fan sand and gravel (Qf). The project area straddles land designated as MRZ-1 and MRZ-3 by the California Department of Conservation, Division of Mines and Geology. The MRZ-1 designation applies to land at the base of the mountains and on the valley floor where "adequate information indicates that no significant mineral deposits are present, or where it is judged that little likelihood for their presence exists." The MRZ-3 zone applies to the Santa Rosa Mountains and designates "areas containing known or inferred mineral occurrences of undetermined mineral resources significance." Land in the southerly portion of the project area once operated as a quarry and was designated MRZ-2, "areas where adequate information indicates that significant mineral deposits are present, or where it is judged that a high likelihood for their presence exists." However, operations at the quarry ceased many years ago, and the land has been developed into a resort residential development called "The Quarry."

The proposed project will not result in any impacts to a known mineral resource or locally important mineral resource recovery site. No mineral recovery operations occur onsite or in the immediate project area.

#### Mitigation Measures:

None required

#### Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program:

None required

12. NOISE -- Would the project result in:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Source:** La Quinta General Plan 2013; Riverside County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan, Volume 1 Policy Document, October 14, 2004.

- a) **Less than Significant Impact.** The proposed project is not expected to generate noise in excess of established standards. During the construction phase, noise will be generated by construction vehicles and equipment accessing the site and clearing vegetation and installing the barrier. However, construction noise impacts will be short-term, will occur during the least sensitive times of the day, and will end once the project is complete. The project will occur in phases, which will limit the extent to which noise affects a particular area. The project area is adjacent to the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area established by the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan and, therefore, will be required to comply with applicable Land Use Adjacent Guidelines pertaining to noise. After construction, no noise impacts are anticipated, except those associated with occasional barrier repairs. Potential impacts should be further addressed in the EIR.
- b) **No Impact.** The proposed project is not expected to require blasting of bedrock or other activities that would generate excessive ground vibration or noise. No impacts are anticipated.
- c) **Less Than Significant Impact.** Over the long-term life of the project, routine monitoring and occasional maintenance activities could result in minimal and temporary noise increases at limited locations. No other permanent long-term noise will be generated.
- d) **Less than Significant Impact.** The project has the potential to generate short-term construction-related noise impacts that will exceed existing ambient noise levels. However, impacts will be temporary and are not expected to be significant. The project EIR should analyze the extent to which they could adversely impact the noise environment.

- e,f) **No Impact.** The subject site is approximately 4.5 miles south of the Bermuda Dunes Airport and approximately 6 miles west of the Jacqueline Cochran Regional Airport. It is not located within the airport land use plan or noise compatibility contours of either airport. No land use incompatibilities with the current or long-term operations of the airports are expected. The project is not located within 2 miles of a private airstrip.

**Mitigation Measures:**

See forthcoming EIR.

**Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program:**

See forthcoming EIR.

13. <b>POPULATION AND HOUSING –</b> Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Source:** La Quinta General Plan 2013.

- a-c) **No Impact.** The project area is in close proximity to several residential and resort residential developments, including Tradition, SilverRock, PGA West, and The Quarry. However, it will not displace any existing housing or people, or require the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. The project will not result in the construction of new housing, public roads, or infrastructure and, therefore, will not directly or indirectly induce population growth. No impacts will occur.

**Mitigation Measures:**

None required

**Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program:**

None required

14. PUBLIC SERVICES –	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
Fire protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Police protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Source:** City of La Quinta General Plan, 2013; “Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones in Local Responsibility Areas (map), CALFire, December 24, 2009.

a) **Fire Protection- Less Than Significant With Mitigation**

The City of La Quinta contracts with the County of Riverside Fire Department for fire protection services. The nearest fire stations to the project area include:

- Station No. 32 (in the vicinity of Tradition)  
78111 Avenue 52
- Station No. 70 (PGA West)  
54001 Madison Street
- Station No. 93 (North La Quinta)  
44555 Adams Street

The Fire Department operates four additional stations in surrounding communities that are available for emergency response. The Department’s first-in-response times range from two to six minutes, and it has an Insurance Services Office (ISO) public protection class rating of four (on a scale of 1 through 10, with 10 being the highest) based on the provision of staffing, communication, water system for suppression, building standards, and other criteria.

The proposed project will not generate new buildings or other improvements that will increase the need for fire protection services. However, the proposed project will create a barrier along the wildland-urban interface between the slopes of the Santa Rosa Mountains and valley floor. Portions of the Santa Rosa Mountains upslope of the project site are designated by CalFire as “very high fire hazard severity zones” under state and federal responsibility. The project could restrict or prevent emergency access to the mountains in the event of a wildfire. Potential project-related impacts and appropriate mitigation measures should be further analyzed in the EIR.

**Police Protection- No Impact**

The City of La Quinta contracts with the Riverside County Sheriff's Department for the provision of police protection services. The proposed project will not generate new buildings or other improvements that will increase the demand for police protection or require the construction of new police facilities. No significant project-related impacts are anticipated.

**Schools- No Impact**

The proposed project will not generate additional student population or affect the quality of education services provided in the project area. It will not result in physical impacts to school buildings or facilities. No impact is expected.

**Parks- Less than Significant With Mitigation**

The proposed project will not attract additional residents to the project area or cause other changes that could increase the use of existing parks. However, the barrier route is immediately adjacent to the Lake Cahuilla Recreation Area, and the project could affect access to the Cove to Lake Trail and Boo Hoff Trail that extend through the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument. Potential impacts and mitigation measures, if necessary, should be further analyzed in the EIR.

**Other Public Facilities – No Impact**

The proposed project is not expected to adversely impact other public facilities.

**Mitigation Measures:**

See forthcoming EIR.

**Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Programs:**

See forthcoming EIR.

15. RECREATION –	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Sources:** La Quinta General Plan, 2013; 2015 Trail Map, Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument, Bureau of Land Management.

- a, b) **Less Than Significant With Mitigation.** The proposed project will not attract additional residents or visitors to the area, or result in other changes that will increase the use of existing parks and recreational facilities. However, if the project area is immediately adjacent to several recreational facilities, including Lake Cahuilla Recreation Area and several golf courses (Tradition, SilverRock, PGA West, and The Quarry). While the project is not expected to directly affect usage or access to these facilities, it could potentially cause visual and/or other indirect impacts.

The project extends along a boundary of the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument, which contains numerous hiking trails. The project could impact access to the trailheads of the Cove to Lake Trail and Boo Hoff Trail near the Lake Cahuilla Recreation Area. Mitigation may be required to assure adequate public access is maintained. Potential adverse impacts and mitigation measures should be analyzed in the Project EIR.

#### **Mitigation Measures:**

See forthcoming EIR.

#### **Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting:**

See forthcoming EIR.

16. <b>TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC</b> – Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Result in inadequate parking capacity?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Source:** City of La Quinta General Plan 2013; 2011 Riverside County Congestion Management Program, Riverside County Transportation Commission, December 14, 2011; Final Coachella Valley Association of Governments Non-Motorized Transportation Plan Update, September 2010.

- a) **Less than Significant Impact.** Construction of the proposed project will result in limited traffic increases in the project area. Vehicles accessing the site may include supply trucks, workers' personal vehicles, and construction equipment. However, traffic volumes are not expected to be substantial, and no project-related traffic delays or detours are anticipated. Access to the barrier route will be taken from adjoining and largely developed lands, including access roads for the existing Coachella Branch Canal and Lake Cahuilla Recreation Area. Exact points of access will be determined through further analysis and discussions with affected property owners and responsible agencies. .

Coordination with the City of La Quinta will ensure that local traffic impacts remain minimal during construction activities. Once all construction activities are complete, traffic patterns will return to their pre-construction conditions and will not generate any significant impacts related to transportation or traffic within the project vicinity. Post-construction traffic will be limited to that needed to complete occasional barrier inspections and repairs. Potential impacts should be evaluated in the EIR.

- b) **No Impact.** None of the roads in the project vicinity are designated in the Riverside County Congestion Management Program or any other congestion management program. No impacts will occur.
- c) **No Impact.** The project area is located approximately 4.5 miles south of the Bermuda Dunes Airport and approximately 6 miles west of the Jacqueline Cochran Regional Airport. It is not located within the boundaries of an airport land use compatibility plan and will not affect any air traffic routes or operations. It will not increase air safety hazards, such as obstructions to navigation or land use incompatibility. No impacts will occur.

- d) **No Impact.** The proposed barrier will not result in the modification of any roadways. The project will also not substantially increase hazards due to a design feature or incompatible uses.
- e) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The project will be required to assure adequate emergency access is maintained during construction and operation. Construction traffic plans will be coordinated with and approved by the City of La Quinta. This should be further analyzed in the EIR.
- f) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The proposed project will not result in the need for permanent parking facilities or structures. Temporary parking will be needed for construction vehicles, and may be located on existing roads. The project proponent will be required to coordinate this with the City prior to project approval. Impacts are expected to be less than significant, but they should be further addressed in the EIR.
- g) **No Impact.** The proposed project will not interfere with policies or programs pertaining to alternative transportation, including the CVAG Non-Motorized Transportation Plan. The project area is not located along a mass transit bus route and does not contain bus stops or turnouts. Most access points are located within planned resort residential developments. There will be no conflict with applicable transit plans or policies.

**Mitigation Measures:**

See forthcoming EIR.

**Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program:**

See forthcoming EIR.



17. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS – Would the project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the projects projected demand in addition to the providers existing commitments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Source:** City of La Quinta General Plan, 2013.

- a, b) **No Impact.** The proposed project will not generate any wastewater flows or adversely impact water quality standards or waste discharge requirements. It will not require any construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities. No impacts will occur.
- c) **No Impact.** The project does not propose any hardscape features, buildings, or other structures that would increase stormwater flows. No new or expanded off-site stormwater management facilities will be required to serve the project.
- d) **Less than Significant Impact.** The Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD) provides water to the planning area. Minimal quantities of water may be required for dust control purposes during construction of the proposed barrier. After construction is complete, no additional water will be demanded. Impacts are expected to be less than significant; however, they should be further addressed in the EIR.
- e) **No Impact.** The project will not generate any wastewater and, therefore, will have no impact on wastewater treatment services or facilities. No impacts will occur.
- f, g) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The project may generate minimal solid waste during construction, but quantities are expected to be negligible. Solid waste is disposed of at the Edom Hill Transfer Station in northern Cathedral City, then transported to regional landfills, all of which have available capacity.

Facility operators are required to comply with applicable statutes. After construction, no solid waste will be generated, and no solid waste collection or disposal services will be required. These issues will be further addressed in the EIR.

**Mitigation Measures:**

See forthcoming EIR.

**Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program:**

See forthcoming EIR.

18. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Does the project have environmental effects, which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- a) **Less than Significant With Mitigation.** As discussed in Section 4 (Biological Resources), the project is intended to safely exclude Peninsular Bighorn Sheep (PBS) from nearby urban development, and no significant adverse impacts to PBS or other species are anticipated. However, the project must be thoughtfully designed, constructed, and maintained to assure risks of injury and/or death for PBS and other species are minimized to the greatest extent possible.

As discussed in Section 5 (Cultural Resources), numerous archaeological resources associated with the Cahuilla have been identified and documented in the project area, and the Cahuilla are known to have inhabited the Santa Rosa foothills and land near ancient Lake Cahuilla, both of which are in the immediate project area. The project area is also close to the original concrete-lined section of the Coachella Branch Canal, which has been identified as a historic resource. Given that the project will not require extensive ground surface disturbances, it is not expected to significantly impact cultural resources. Nonetheless, the EIR should fully evaluate the extent to which the project may impact cultural resources and establish mitigation measures to assure they are not significantly impacted.

- b) **Less than Significant Impact.** The project consists of a barrier along the urban-mountain interface for the purpose of protecting a sensitive biological species. It does not involve the construction of habitable buildings or major infrastructure improvements that will attract additional population or consume non-renewable resources. It will not significantly alter existing terrain or remove or degrade existing biological habitat. Cumulative impacts will be less than significant.
- c) **Less than Significant Impact.** During construction, the project could result in temporary noise intrusions where the barrier is in close proximity to residences and golf course facilities. The project could restrict access for emergency personnel in the event of a wildland fire in the Santa Rosa Mountains, although thoughtful design and inclusion of appropriate mitigation measures are expected to minimize impacts to acceptable levels. Potential impacts should be further analyzed in the project EIR.

**Mitigation Measures:**

See forthcoming EIR.

**Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program:**

See forthcoming EIR.

## **LIST OF EXHIBITS**

- Exhibit 1: Regional Location Map  
Exhibit 2: Project Vicinity Map  
Exhibit 3: Project Area Map

## **REFERENCES**

2035 City of La Quinta General Plan, amended and adopted February 19, 2013

Riverside County Important Farmland 2010 map, California Department of Conservation, Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, 2012

Air Quality Management Plan, South Coast Air Quality Management District, 2012

Coachella Valley PM<sub>10</sub> State Implementation Plan (SIP), 2003

South Coast Air Quality Management District CEQA Handbook, 1993

Biological Survey Report for the Coachella Canal Relocation - SilverRock Country Club, Coachella Valley Water District, 2013

California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB), California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan and Natural Community Conservation Plan, 2008

Recovery Plan for Bighorn Sheep in the Peninsular Ranges, California, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2000

Biological Survey Report, Coachella Canal Relocation, SilverRock Country Club, La Quinta, California, Coachella Valley Water District, October 2013

Class III Cultural Resources Assessment for the Canal Water Conveyance System Relocation Project, Riverside County, California, Applied EarthWorks, Inc., September 2013

A Phase I Cultural Resource Investigation of 'The Ranch' Project Area Located in the Community of La Quinta, California, McKenna et. al., September 12, 1999

City of La Quinta Engineering Bulletin #09-03, June 18, 2010

La Quinta Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan, 2013

Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones in Local Responsibility Areas (map), CALFire, December 24, 2009

Envirostor database, California Department of Toxic Substances Control, accessed October 2015

City of La Quinta Official Zoning Map

Mineral Land Classification: Aggregate Materials in the Palm Springs Production-Consumption Region, prepared by California Department of Conservation-Division of Mines and Geology, 1988

Soils Survey of Riverside County, California, Coachella Valley Area, U.S. Soil Conservation Survey, September, 1980

Riverside County Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan, Volume 1 Policy Document, October 14, 2004

2015 Trail Map, Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument, Bureau of Land Management

2011 Riverside County Congestion Management Program, Riverside County Transportation Commission, December 14, 2011

Final Coachella Valley Association of Governments Non-Motorized Transportation Plan Update, Ryan Snyder Associates, LLC, September 2010

Bighorn Institute

Wed, 9 Mar 2016 16:50:41 -0800

To: Katie Barrows

meeting

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Hi Katie,

We were asked if members of the La Quinta City Council or CVCC will be attending the public scoping meeting tomorrow evening...do you know if they will be there?

Thanks,

Aimee

Catherine Lane

Thu, 10 Mar 2016 14:51:50 -0800

To: Katie Barrows

Cc: council@la-quinta.org

big horn sheep barrier project

---

We do not support the building of a fence or any other obstruction in regards to the big horn sheep. We strongly believe other solutions can first be implemented...such as....

1. do nothing...the sheep have been here longer than us & before the golf course was planted they found solutions to subtain themselves.
2. hire dogs trained (or get them trained) to comply with keeping the sheep in designated areas which may still be on some spaces within the golf course but not near housing.
3. Relocate the sheep.

If the community decides to rope in the sheep they will seek other areas but eventually the mountains will be surrounded with housing etc & then what?

Thank you for your time...

Catherine & Rich Lane  
48648 Paseo Tarazo  
La Quinta, CA 92253  
760-564-4808

Bruce Titus

Tue, 8 Mar 2016 20:15:21 +0000

To: kbarrows@cvag.org

Big Horn Sheep

---

Katie.... Do we have a copy of the boundaries of the purposed fence??

Bruce Titus, President & CEO

Bruce Titus Automotive [www.brucetitus.com](http://www.brucetitus.com)

6221 Tacoma Mall Blvd, Tacoma 98409

o. (253) 284-0140 f. (253) 474-0805

e. [brucet@brucetitus.com](mailto:brucet@brucetitus.com)

"Count on Us, All Around the Sound"



**Bruce Cathcart**

Sat, 12 Mar 2016 00:54:20 +0000

To: kbarrows@cvag.org

Cc: council@la-quinta.org, levans@la-quinta.org

Fencing the Bighorn sheep in or out?

---

Hi Katie,

I just wanted to add my two cents regarding the issue of the fencing of the City and Private properties to keep the local Big Horn populations on BLM property. While I am all in favor of doing what is right for the sheep, if it is determined that a fence or barrier is the right solution, then definitely a fence or barrier should be built. Who shall be responsible for the payment and installation of that fence or barrier is where I take issue with what has been proposed. To me it boils down to the question; Are you fencing the sheep in or out? If the City or private owners had a problem with the sheep encroaching on their property and they instigated the fence as a means to keep the sheep off of their property, I would argue that it would be incumbent upon them to erect a barrier to protect their private property to keep the sheep out... however, this does not appear to be the case. It is the BLM and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife that want to keep the sheep on the BLM property that is adjacent to the City and privately held lands. Under these circumstances I believe that it should be incumbent upon these agencies to pay for and build the fence/barrier to meet their obligation to keep the sheep safe and on the BLM land... thus fencing them in. The example of the cattle rancher comes to mind to illustrate my point here. The cattle rancher does not go to all of his neighbors and ask them to pay for and install a fence around his ranch to keep his cattle in... in fact, it is the cattle rancher's responsibility to keep his cattle off of the adjacent neighbor's property and to build his own fence to do so. I do not see this situation as any different.

Respectfully submitted,

**Bruce Y. Cathcart**

Bruce Y Cathcart

Broker, La Quinta Palms Realty

"Your Friendly Professionals"

51001 Eisenhower Dr. La Quinta, CA. 92253

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FAX: (760) 564-0344

From: Blaine Carian [mailto:grapes@desertfresh.com]  
Sent: Monday, March 28, 2016 6:51 PM  
To: Katie Barrows <kbarrows@cvag.org>  
Subject: One more

Katie,

For the wildlife agencies:

- 1) Dr. Wehausen spoke of massive die offs if bighorn are constantly exposed to high value food that is not natural. Can the agencies cite any data that reflects this as it pertains to De Anza CC which has been visited by bighorn for over three decades.
- 2) Please cite any oleander deaths at De Anza CC. The Country Club is populated by oleander and is visited by bighorn daily.
- 3) Do bighorn populations dip when a wet year is followed a dry year?

Regards

Blaine Carian

**From:** Blaine Carian [<mailto:grapes@desertfresh.com>]

**Sent:** Monday, March 28, 2016 4:55 PM

**To:** Katie Barrows <[kbarrows@cvag.org](mailto:kbarrows@cvag.org)>

**Subject:** Environmental Assessment

Katie,

Question for the wildlife agencies in the Environmental Report.

- 1) Has De Anza CC been approached about fencing its property from bighorn?
- 2) If yes what is the specific design and plan.
- 3) Are the sheep in La Quinta (SilverRock band) the same genetically as the sheep being hunted north of Interstate 10?
- 4) Have the agencies performed a range survey to determine if the bighorn will survive with the food and water available after fencing?

Question for your consultant.

- 1) Has CVAG done a survey of the properties that contain oleander?
- 2) If so which properties specifically do and do not contain oleander?
- 3) Have the property owners been approached (homeowner associations) about removing the oleander?
- 4) Do plans now exist to build water troughs for the bighorn after fencing?

Thank you  
Blaine Carian

Anne Cheung

Sun, 13 Mar 2016 10:57:12 -0700

To: Katie Barrows

Scoping meeting

---

Hi Katie,

Are the public comments posted anywhere? I am looking for one comment in particular from the gentlemen in the royal blue tank top. Maybe you can answer this question. Do you recall how many yearlings he saw in January at Silver Rock? I know I didn't agree with him but I wanted to know the number that he said and had photos. I would like to add that to my comments that I will be submitting.

Thank you,  
Anne Cheung

**From:** Alexandra Sheldon [<mailto:monetrenoirsasha@aol.com>]

**Sent:** Thursday, March 24, 2016 11:13 AM

**To:** Katie Barrows <[kbarrows@cvag.org](mailto:kbarrows@cvag.org)>

**Subject:** Fencing project La Quinta

The fencing project in La Quinta is more than keeping the Peninsular Bighorn Sheep off the golf course to eat plants that are not good for them, or be in the way of golfers, or have a risk of being hit by golf balls ... the main reason for me and many others, who have witnessed this ... is the urgent, dire preventative for more horrendous drownings of these magnificent sheep that have occurred due to their getting into the water culverts that are within the golf course. It is tragic for the sheep and a non stop nightmare sight for the golfers who have been unfortunate to witness this. The drownings, plants, and possibility of being hit by golf balls ... Are all a "take" on these animals. It is an urgent matter.

Sincerely,

Mrs Sidney Sheldon

Sent from my iPhone

kristi@kristibailey.com

Tue, 8 Mar 2016 14:43:26 -0700

To: Katie Barrows

La Quinta Peninsular Bighorn Sheep Barrier Project

---

Katie:

I am not able to attend the meeting.. The sheep are one of the reasons I will never sell my PGA West desert home. It is such a unique experience to sit and watch them. There aren't many places in CA where you can have animals to enjoy on or around your property. I would hate to see anything change the experience unless they are hurting people.

From what I've seen of them they are very docile and everyone I ever speak to in the neighborhood enjoys the uniqueness. Are they hurting people? Why do some feel the need to spend the money on miles of fencing to keep the sheep out?

Sincerely,

Brian & Kristi Bailey  
54-361 Oak Hill  
La Quinta,  
949-582-7555

**From:** Kendale Trahan [<mailto:kendalet@thequarrygc.com>]

**Sent:** Monday, March 28, 2016 4:28 PM

**To:** Katie Barrows <[kbarrows@cvag.org](mailto:kbarrows@cvag.org)>

**Subject:** RE: La Quinta Peninsular Bighorn Sheep Project

Hi Katie,

On behalf of the 307 members at the Quarry golf Club I would like to comment that ALL members are opposed to a fence surrounding this property.

Kendale Trahan  
General Manager  
The Quarry at La Quinta

**KAREN PELLETIER**

Thu, 10 Mar 2016 22:13:44 +0000

To: Katie Barrows

Reply-To: KAREN PELLETIER

**PBS Meeting Tonight**

---

Katie,

I won't be able to attend tonight--family medical emergency...but here are the issues we are concerned about...

1. Is there really a problem? It appears to us that the population of PBS has exploded in recent years. Even net the drowning the population seems much better off.

2. Are there other ways to handle it other than a fence? Cattle guards, water source up the hill?

Please keep me posted.

Thanks,

**Karen Pelletier**

760-771-2013

760-861-5482 cell



KAREN PELLETIER

Wed, 9 Mar 2016 21:43:52 +0000

To: Katie Barrows

Reply-To: KAREN PELLETIER

Providing a Rationale

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Katie,

Thanks for talking to me today. One of the reasons I think it is so important to document, scientifically, that the PBS need to be kept away from the golf course is that a lot of people are mistrustful of the information. Most people here are familiar with when the Fish & Wildlife Agency tried to bulldoze through the closure of the Bump and Grind. There truly was a lack of substantiation, so much so that the courts and Governor ruled against the Agency to keep the trail open 3/4 of the year.

To build support your data should be unimpeachable.

[Bump and Grind Hiker Gets Hands on Bighorn Sheep Data](#)

<p>image</p> 	<h2>Bump and Grind Hiker Gets Hands on Bighorn Sheep Data</h2> <p>A Bermuda Dunes hiker, says he finally has his hands on some of the information that he believes proves there's no reason to block-off the top of the popular Bump a...</p> <p>View on <a href="http://www.kesq.com">www.kesq.com</a>      Preview by Yahoo</p>
--	---

Karen Pelletier

760-771-2013

760-861-5482 cell

Judy Saner

Thu, 10 Mar 2016 09:41:58 -0800

To: Katie Barrows

Bighorn sheep - no wall

---

Dear Ms. Barrows:

We should let the bighorn sheep be. Let Mother Nature take her course. We are in the sheeps' habitat; they are in ours. It all seems to work pretty well. No dumb wall is appropriate.

Thanks for your work.

Sincerely,

Judith Saner

PGA West member

Sent from my iPad

**From:** Joyce Peirce [<mailto:joyce.peirce@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 24, 2016 7:42 AM  
**To:** Katie Barrows <[kbarrows@cvag.org](mailto:kbarrows@cvag.org)>  
**Subject:** PGA West Canal

Hi. I just learned about the problem of the bighorn sheep on the golf course and the danger of the canal to their safety. Why is there no barrier, or fence? That's horrendous. Please remedy this asap. When saving the lives of animals (especially an endangered species) is so easy it should be criminal not to do it. Thank you for taking action.

Joyce Peirce

--

[MELTMethodBerkshires.com](http://MELTMethodBerkshires.com)  
[facebook.com/meltmethodberkshires](https://facebook.com/meltmethodberkshires)  
[feelbetterwithMELT@gmail.com](mailto:feelbetterwithMELT@gmail.com)  
413-274-6831

**From:** McBride, Jenness [[mailto:jenness\\_mcbride@fws.gov](mailto:jenness_mcbride@fws.gov)]

**Sent:** Monday, March 28, 2016 3:22 PM

**To:** Katie Barrows <[kbarrows@cvag.org](mailto:kbarrows@cvag.org)>

**Cc:** Ken Corey <[ken\\_corey@fws.gov](mailto:ken_corey@fws.gov)>

**Subject:** USFWS Comments on Environmental Initial Study for the La Quinta Peninsular Bighorn Sheep Barrier Project

In Reply Refer To:

FWS-ERIV-09B0023-16CPA0276

Ms. Katie Barrows  
Director of Environmental Resources  
Coachella Valley Association of Governments  
73-710 Fred Waring Drive, Suite 200  
Palm Desert, California 92260

Subject: Notice of Preparation and Environmental Initial Study for the La Quinta Peninsular Bighorn Sheep Barrier Project, Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan, Riverside County, California

Dear Ms. Barrows:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has reviewed the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission's (CVCC) Notice of Preparation and Environmental Initial Study for the subject project under the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP or Plan). We received the notice from CVCC by email on February 25, 2016, and accessed the Initial Study on the CVMSHCP website; we also received a print copy of the notice and Initial Study from Terra Nova Planning & Research, Inc., on February 25, 2016. Below we provide general comments we believe should be considered in the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) now in preparation, as well as specific comments about the Initial Study.

#### General Comments

We recommend that the DEIR clarify the regulatory status of the CVMSHCP's management action requiring construction of a barrier (i.e., an 8-foot fence or functional equivalent) if Peninsular bighorn sheep are using artificial sources of food or water in unfenced areas of existing urban development within or near a Conservation Area (CVMSHCP page 8-26). The fence requirement (as we refer to it here) is not a government "mandate" as many members of the public describe it – it's a requirement of the CVMSHCP, which all Permittees voluntarily undertook to implement when they adopted the Plan, signed the Implementing Agreement, and accepted the Service's

incidental take permit. Therefore, our February 28, 2014, joint letter with the Department of Fish and Wildlife to CVCC and the City of La Quinta regarding their responsibility to exclude bighorn sheep from accessing unsuitable areas is not a “mandate” but rather a notification and reminder to the Permittees to fulfill the terms and conditions they agreed to in the CVMSHCP.

In addition to the clarification above, we recommend that the DEIR describe the regulatory background of the project in detail, so the public will have a better understanding of the fence requirement in the context of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and the CVMSHCP. In particular, the ESA definition of “take” should be quoted from the statute and its implementing regulations, and the process by which the Service analyzes take should be described. For example, the DEIR should explain that the Service may approve take that occurs incidental to otherwise lawful activities by issuing an incidental take permit that is supported by a conservation plan, such as the CVMSHCP, to mitigate the effects of take resulting from covered activities. To further relate the take analysis to the CVMSHCP, we believe it is important to distinguish the different forms of take (e.g., to “wound, kill” individual animals vs. to “harm” wildlife through significant habitat modification or degradation). In general, when we are considering any incidental take permit application, by law we first look at how a species would be impacted, whether or not take would occur, and how the proposed conservation plan would minimize and mitigate the impacts of the take to the maximum extent practicable. Then we analyze whether that level of take would appreciably reduce the likelihood of the entire species to survive and recover in the wild. We believe it important that the public understand that all sources of take must be analyzed and mitigated, regardless of whether or not the take would jeopardize the species’ continued existence. We would be glad to work with you to develop the regulatory language and context for the fence requirement in the DEIR.

The CVMSHCP is the legal conservation plan the Permittees have committed to implement to mitigate development impacts in the Plan area over a 75-year term. The Permittees are authorized by Federal and State permits to incidentally take 27 covered species that would be harmed by loss of habitat to development. For all covered species, including Peninsular bighorn sheep, the incidental take permits authorize take in the form of harm (modification, degradation) to bighorn sheep habitat, as measured by acres of habitat impacted by development. Take must be mitigated by the Permittees’ acquisition from willing sellers of suitable bighorn sheep habitat for conservation in perpetuity. The permits do not cover take in the form of death or injury of bighorn sheep. However, the Plan did envision an adaptive management measure to prevent sheep from accessing forage and water in certain areas, such as golf resorts, where they could be exposed to urban hazards. Thus, the fence requirement is part of the CVMSHCP’s overall mitigation package to address impacts to bighorn sheep as needed in certain circumstances.

The Service considers construction of a sheep exclusion fence as an effective measure to prevent or reduce bighorn sheep deaths that occur as a result of sheep accessing forage and water at the wildland-urban interface in La Quinta golf resorts, where sheep are at risk of injury and death from urban hazards. An exclusion fence will also support the

recovery of Peninsular bighorn sheep in their natural habitat; in that sense, every bighorn sheep death prevented by a fence is one step closer to recovery of the species.

### Specific Comments

The Initial Study concludes that impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporation for certain issues under 8 of the 18 Environmental Factors evaluated in the Environmental Checklist. Although no examples are provided for such mitigation, we believe that in most cases “mitigation” would likely be adequately addressed through appropriate project design measures. For example, ornamental fence features or unobtrusive paint colors would address aesthetic and visual concerns; safety features such as bottom flap gates would address runoff and erosion related to geology and soils; and self-closing pedestrian gates at suitable intervals would allow access for emergency personnel and hikers to address concerns related to public services and recreation. We recommend that the DEIR clarify that appropriate design features will be incorporated upfront in the project description, obviating the need for any additional mitigation. The DEIR should also make clear that the fence requirement itself a mitigation feature of the CVMSHCP to prevent or reduce bighorn sheep mortality in certain situations.

For Biological Resources (d), the Initial Study finds that the project would result in a potentially significant impact by “interfer[ing] substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites.” This is the only potentially significant impact found by the Initial Study. The text does not indicate which wildlife species would be impacted or why movement into urban areas is necessary for them. We disagree that a sheep exclusion fence at the wildland-urban interface would result in a potentially significant impact to wildlife movement. We recommend that the DEIR clarify that urban development at the foot of the Santa Rosa Mountains in the La Quinta area has already disrupted and destroyed historical wildlife movement patterns between the mountains and the valley floor. Therefore, we believe this factor should more appropriately be evaluated as “less than significant impact” and that preparation of a DEIR is unnecessary.

For Biological Resources (f), the Initial Study finds that the project would result in “less than significant impact” by “conflict[ing] with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan.” As explained in the Initial Study, “[T]he project will not conflict with the provisions of the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan and Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP) or any other adopted conservation plans.” Indeed, as we noted in our general comments above, barrier/fence construction is a requirement of the CVMSHCP (and NCCP) under certain conditions, and therefore does not conflict with the Plan. The Initial Study notes that the project is also consistent with the Service’s Recovery Plan for Peninsular bighorn sheep, which recommends fence construction to exclude sheep from urban areas where they have begun to use urban sources of forage and water. Therefore, we believe this factor should be more appropriately evaluated as “no impact”. This comment likewise applies to Land Use/Planning (c), which also should be evaluated as “no impact”.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the Initial Study for this project. If you have any questions about our comments, please contact me at the number below.  
Sincerely,

Jenness McBride  
Chief, Coachella and Imperial Valleys Division

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Palm Springs Fish and Wildlife Office  
777 East Tahquitz Canyon Way, Suite 208  
Palm Springs, California 92262  
760-322-2070, ext. 203

-----Original Message-----

From: [emlovesjellyfish@gmail.com](mailto:emlovesjellyfish@gmail.com) [<mailto:emlovesjellyfish@gmail.com>]

Sent: Wednesday, March 23, 2016 8:10 PM

To: Katie Barrows <[kbarrows@cvag.org](mailto:kbarrows@cvag.org)>

Subject: Sheep fence at PGA West

To whom it may concern,

Please please please add a barrier fence around PGA West to protect bighorn sheep!

I learned of the plight of bighorn sheep at a special presentation from Bighorn Institute a few years ago.

I am a wildlife rehabilitator, and care deeply for our desert wildlife. Adding the much-needed barrier fence would help people and wildlife coexist.

Thank you for your concern,

Emma Baldwin

Sent from my iPhone



**From:** Dennis Gallifent [<mailto:dgallifent@dc.rr.com>]

**Sent:** Thursday, March 10, 2016 1:25 PM

**To:** Joanna Stueckle <[jstueckle@cvag.org](mailto:jstueckle@cvag.org)>

**Subject:** Fence

*Your request for the city of La Quinta to build a fence to prohibit the big Horn sheep from coming on to the golf course is like me asking my neighbor to build a fence around his house so my children will not play in his yard..... Now think about that ----  
-----does that make sense to you----- certainly does not to me.*

*Dennis*

*La Quinta resident*

Debi EMail

Thu, 10 Mar 2016 18:45:26 -0800

To: Katie Barrows

proposed fence

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Hello,

Sorry I could not make the meeting tonight but home recovering from a medical condition.

Heard about a proposed fence for a sheep barrier and as a homeowner on the Palmer Private course, PGA West, La Quinta I would strongly oppose such a solution.

Have any other solutions been discussed that we missed. If not, there should have been would you not agree.

If possible could you please send us either the transcript from tonights meeting or at least information on what was discussed.

Thank You

Debi Snyder

Daniel Sturgill

Tue, 15 Mar 2016 12:31:37 -0700

To: Katie Barrows

Cc: levans@la-quinta.org, kfranklin@la-quinta.org

Peninsular Big Horn Sheep

---

Katie,

I would like to make a case for **not** installing a sheep barrier adjacent to The Quarry, Lake Cahuilla, PGA West, Silver Rock and The Tradition based on information outlined in 'The Recovery Plan' primarily authored by Ester Rubin (Oct. 2000). The compilation of facts, observations and measurements in this document was created for use by US Fish and Wildlife Region 1, US Forest Service, Aqua Caliente Cahuilla Indians, CA Parks/Recreation and CA Fish/Game.

In this document there are several items that strongly support an argument against barriers/fences in the sedate areas listed above:

- Fragmentation caused by barriers block Connectivity of Habitat that leads to inbreeding and depression... Currently there are fences/barriers bordering Rancho Mirage, several courses in Indian Wells, Hwy 74, Interstate 10 and other arterial roads. These barriers have likely lead to connectivity problems already.
- Ewes require high nutrient forage (grasses are high) during late gestation and when lactating. Without high nutrient forage there is over an 80% mortality rate for lambs in the first few months.
- Sheep deprived of adequate forage and water have a much higher rate of disease.
- Forcing Peninsular Big Horn Sheep to leave the protection of steep barren mountain sides (lower levels of the Peninsular Mountain Range) near food and water makes them much more vulnerable to predation.

It seems the focus by the CVCC is predicated on the fact that barriers are the way to go. I believe just the few points above clearly argue for other considerations. The information put forth during the meeting about the death of 2 sheep by drowning, 1 death by the ingestion of oleander and a 4<sup>th</sup> by a vehicle over the last several years... though tragic are minimal when we consider the big picture. By building a barrier in the name of "Protecting the Sheep" we will likely be killing many more sheep than the aforementioned losses. Though if a barrier is built their deaths will go unnoticed and occur out of sight...but sadly they will likely die in greater numbers.

I advocate we take the path of more observation and cohabitation ahead of constructing a barrier. Because the CVCC titles golf course grass and available water as artificial...it should not be totally discarded as wrong or unacceptable. The flock has grown considerably in the last 5 years. This fact alone should carry tremendous value towards any future decisions. One last thought is as the final stages of Silver Rock are built-out the pathway(s) for sheep to somehow find their way to major arterials will be virtually eliminated along the alignment of the proposed barrier/fence.

Thanks for your time,

Dan Sturgill  
57605 Ballybunion  
La Quinta, CA 92253  
206.852.9833

Dan Zeising

Tue, 8 Mar 2016 16:02:57 -0800

To: Katie Barrows

Forget it

---

The bighorn have rights.

Since when do people feel they have

A right to infringe on the rights of animals. We enjoy them, they enjoy us.

Once again do gooders at work for no good.

NOW we have an ugly fence to look at. Evidently it doesn't effect YOU.

Dan Zeising

Dan Zeising

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [SylviaEnder@aol.com](mailto:SylviaEnder@aol.com) [<mailto:SylviaEnder@aol.com>]

**Sent:** Wednesday, March 23, 2016 7:04 PM

**To:** Katie Barrows <[kbarrows@cvag.org](mailto:kbarrows@cvag.org)>

**Subject:** Fence needed in La Quinta to keep Bighorn Sheep safe!

**Dear Ms. Barrows,**

**We live at Thunderbird Country Club in Rancho Mirage and our fence has been HUGELY successful in keeping the beautiful sheep safe and out of our urban areas.**

**La Quinta needs the same fence!**

**Please, we love the sheep very much and don't want to see any more of them drown or get sick...**

**Thank you very kindly,**

**Sylvia & Neil Ender  
70854 Fairway Drive  
Rancho Mirage, CA 92270  
(760) 328-5405**

-----Original Message-----

From: Susan's Email [<mailto:kemosabesusan@aol.com>]

Sent: Thursday, March 10, 2016 12:16 PM

To: Katie Barrows <[kbarrows@cvag.org](mailto:kbarrows@cvag.org)>

Subject: Peninsular Big Horn Sheep

Dear Ms. Barrows,

Unfortunately I am not able to attend this evenings meeting and I do hope the meeting minutes will be available to read.

I have lived on the Palmer Course near the canal and the flow control dam since 1994. I walk my dog twice daily in that vicinity so I have witnessed many changes since that was before Silver Rock was built. Initially I saw usually 4 or 5 sheep and now the herd numbers over 30. I would say they are doing well. They have adapted which is what animals do to survive. Not so long ago this entire area was not developed so there were natural water sources which provided their water and water for vegetation. The winter run off water was especially important because they graze at lower elevations during the winter. As we have encroached into their territory and made 'artificial' areas to eat I think it is truly unfair to not allow them access. Putting up a fence and making them have to find another home will create a hardship. Where is it believed they will go? Where in the 25, 50, or 100 mile range is there a better place?

The money it would take to erect a huge fence could be spent in more appropriate and important ways.

--I believe there is a need to educate people who live in the areas where the sheep frequent. People read their mail so send pertinent information to them. There are people who have no idea about wild animals and their habits. Ignorance, fear, and numerous other human reactions could be addressed. The sheep are fine, just leave them alone.

--The poison plants like oleander should be removed. On the Palmer course the landscaping is going to be redone in the very near future anyway. It's in the plans. That is a simple fix.

--Traffic. The sheep do not go far from the base of the mountains. They have a safety barrier of at most a couple hundred meters that they stay within. If threatened they head to the mountains. With this in mind I can understand the fence in Rancho Mirage and at Happy Point in La Quinta or anywhere the highway is close to the mountains and within their safety zone range. Additionally, reduced speed limits, signs warning of Big Horn Sheep crossings, and huge fines if a person hits one. HUGE FINES that go back to the sheep fund.

-- As far as roads in the Palmer gate, warning signs should be put up along Riviera for drivers to beware. The speed limit is 20 so going that speed there shouldn't be an issue. I haven't heard that there has ever been an accident involving a car or golf cart here. Again, an informed public and awareness goes a long way.

--The drowning of a couple sheep is interesting. There has got to be more to the story. These sheep can climb anything so I thought. If getting out of the canal is an issue, then add steps, or something randomly along the sides to assist. We aren't talking about a very long expanse where this is an issue if it is indeed one.

--If a fence was put up what if they came around it anyway and ventured back this way seeking food? The bridges are now basically blocked for their escape route back to the mountains and they'd have to go the long way around. This makes them far more susceptible to be preyed upon.

I appreciate the effort to 'help' the sheep but sometimes man doesn't know what is best. The animals have been taking care of themselves for a long long time and adjusting. Highways and urbanization certainly pose problems for their survival in the harsh desert. Putting up a fence so they go away isn't the answer. We need to co exist and be flexible to change our ways, not theirs. Really, poisonous plants? Get rid of them!  
I think money would be better spent helping with the gene pool. Man made obstacles certainly challenge the introduction of new bloodlines.  
I enjoy seeing the sheep and they certainly look healthy and content and their herd is growing fine. Let's leave them be for now.

Most sincerely,  
Susan Fry  
54-280 Riviera  
La Quinta  
760-564-5148

Shirley Nichols

Fri, 11 Mar 2016 13:12:29 -0800

To: Katie Barrows

mt sheep

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As a resident of the PGA West I would like to comment on the planned fencing off of the area.

The fence that was built last year along the SilverRock course has not kept the sheep off the course, it is an ugly eyesore and detracts from the natural beauty of the area.

The sheep are very resourceful animals and I am sure a fence will not stop them from finding a way to get where they want to graze.

The sheep are a natural asset to our area and should be enjoyed. Besides the huge cost to build yet another ugly eyesore! Those of us who own homes along the course will have to look at this forever!

When the televised PGA golf tournaments are held here for all the world to see one of the highlights that is shown is our beautiful mountain sheep!

As far as using the argument that these animals need to be protected from eating something unhealthy or drowning is unrealistic. There are casualties among any animals wild or domestic. They climb all over the high pinnacles of the Santa Rosa Mountains and it seems they have survived! So let's use a little common sense here.

Please, please do not take away the natural beauty of our area!!

Shirley Nichols

--

Sent from Gmail Mobile



**From:** Roland Burbank [<mailto:willyrabee@aol.com>]

**Sent:** Monday, March 28, 2016 9:52 AM

**To:** Katie Barrows <[kbarrows@cvag.org](mailto:kbarrows@cvag.org)>

**Subject:** La Quinta fencing project

Hi Katie,

Thanks for taking the time to read my brief note in support of the Bighorn Institute's ongoing efforts to maintain a viable population of Desert Bighorn sheep in and around the Coachella Valley.

Being veterinarians, my wife, Melinda, and I have been available for health/medical assistance for the Institute's varied activities since 1985. I became a board member in the early 90's. Thus we have seen first hand how BI's commitment to sheep conservation has successfully influenced this animal's increase in numbers.

One of the things that has been extremely helpful in reducing sheep mortality is the chain-link fence on the hillsides west of Rancho Mirage. Since its construction, sheep access to the high-risk Highway 111 (as well as to the backyards of housing developments on that side of the road), has been curtailed quite effectively.

Thus, knowing that fencing will work, we are in favor of the proposed La Quinta fencing which would keep the sheep out of the canal, off the golf courses, and away from risks related to human activity.

We would greatly appreciate your favorable actions toward this project.

Sincerely,

Roland K. Burbank, DVM, and  
Melinda Byers-Burbank, DVM

**Rick Herrick**

Tue, 8 Mar 2016 18:11:21 -0800

To: Katie Barrows

Cc: Cathy Herrick

**BIGHORN SHEEP BARRIER PROJECT**

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Hello Katie Barrows,

Thank you for your time on the phone today. In general I am in favor of protecting the Santa Rosa Big Horn Sheep but I am concerned about the ascetics once a possible fence is constructed. One of the great visual features of the Santa Rosa Mountains is the rugged untouched look that is immediately contiguous to the developed lands. It has looked that way for thousands of years and has been the subject of countless artists paintings and photos. If possible please allow that look to be enjoyed by others for at least another thousand years.

My second concern is that a fence may direct the Sheep to find other ways to seek water and food during the hot summer months.

Although a golf course is not the ideal environment for these wild animals, alternative paths may expose them to more densely populated areas as well and busy streets.

Perhaps there is another method to allow co-existence of this exquisite animal and the humans who love and appreciate them.

As I mentioned on the phone, once I saw one in person I had a brand new appreciation for them, much like the first time I saw a whale on the open ocean.

Thank you

Rick and Cathy Herrick  
PGA West Residents

**From:** Gmail\_I [<mailto:rich.rjwood@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Monday, March 28, 2016 3:48 PM

**To:** Katie Barrows <[kbarrows@cvag.org](mailto:kbarrows@cvag.org)>

**Subject:** Comments and Questions on the Notice of Preparation LA QUINTA PENINSULAR BIGHORN SHEEP BARRIER PROJECT

Katie Barrows

[kbarrows@cvag.org](mailto:kbarrows@cvag.org)

Director of Environmental Resources

Coachella Valley Association of Governments

Dear Katie:

Please include the following questions and comments in the SilverRock Fence/Barrier EIS/EIR:

Do the Wildlife Agencies (USFWS & CFWS) have statutory authority to mandate developers and private property owners adjacent to SilverRock erect a fence or barrier?

What is the summer range of this group/herd?

Did this herd exist at the time bighorn sheep were listed as endangered?

What is the recruitment on SilverRock and how does it compare to bighorn in the wild?

Are the bighorn sheep on SilverRock genetically identical to the ones being hunted on the north side of the I10 freeway?

Do the Wildlife Agencies have a current count of the bighorn sheep in the region surrounding SilverRock as well as on the SilverRock golf course? At a meeting held at CVCC approximately a year past, Mr. Randy Botta of CDFW had no idea of the numbers of bighorn in the area surrounding SilverRock and on SilverRock.

Has Dr. Wehausen been provided accurate, up-to-date information on the status of bighorn population numbers at SilverRock. Comments made during a CVCC meeting held in January indicate there is zero recruitment. I believe this to be false and have photos indicating otherwise. Are the Wildlife Agencies relying on Bighorn Institute for bighorn sheep population counts? See attached photos taken in late January, 2016.

Have the Wildlife Agencies Conducted a forage survey of the area to determine the impact of many bighorn sheep starving due to lack of food after completion of the barrier/fence?

Do the Wildlife agencies have plans to install artificial water troughs adjacent to the fence/barrier to provide water, as there is no natural water nearby? This was done in Rancho

Mirage and there are at least five artificial water troughs adjacent to the RM fence. How close is the nearest permanent natural water source?

Do the Wildlife Agencies intend to continue excluding La Quinta City Council members from their activities and communications in the area around SilverRock as they have done and continue to do to the present? See attachment.

Has the probability of the proposed fence/barrier to dam storm water debris flow and cause intensified flooding and property damage been assessed?

Have the detrimental effects of the fence/barrier on ingress and egress of other species been evaluated?

Has the possibility of enhanced predation been evaluated by the fence allowing a predator to trap bighorn sheep against the fence?

Has relocation been given a thorough biological study? It is being successfully accomplished elsewhere, contact me for exact details.

-----Original Message-----

From: [info@silverfishpress.com](mailto:info@silverfishpress.com) [<mailto:info@silverfishpress.com>]

Sent: Saturday, March 26, 2016 3:07 AM

To: Katie Barrows <[kbarrows@cvag.org](mailto:kbarrows@cvag.org)>

Subject: comment regarding proposed Peninsular bighorn barrier in La Quinta

We note and appreciate your request for public comment regarding the above.

The evidence that such a barrier aids in bighorn survival rates is overwhelming and incontrovertible. Not only does such a barrier work but it has been mandated by wildlife authorities. Do not allow developers and those who regard federally endangered wildlife on their golf courses as "cute" to dictate the course of events. This is an critical need and should be met as soon as possible.

s/ Mike Rivkin

Michael Herman

Fri, 11 Mar 2016 13:36:00 -0800

To: Katie Barrows

Bighorn Fence

---

I fell that it would be foolhardy to proceed with fencing out the sheep until such time as you have completed an accurate count of those sheep including a report on their present health. What also must be considered is how a fence will further impact the Bighorns' future health. Cutting them off from any source of food and water may do more harm than good.

Michael Herman

La Quinta

Sent from my iPad

**From:** Michael Dee [<mailto:mjdrhino@yahoo.com>]

**Sent:** Friday, March 25, 2016 8:37 PM

**To:** Katie Barrows <[kbarrows@cvag.org](mailto:kbarrows@cvag.org)>

**Subject:** Bighorn sheep

Dear Ms. Barrows,

I would like to comment on the ongoing problem of the bighorn sheep that continually are being seen on the golf courses in La Quinta. I feel it is extremely important that they be fenced off the courses in order for them to remain wild and not be allowed to inhabit this area. We have already seen the tragedy of bighorn drowning in the canal and the potential for further accidents to continue.

The city of Rancho Mirage put up a fence in order to stop the bighorn from coming down and becoming killed when they attempted to cross Highway 111. This barrier has been up for over 10 years and there has not been a sheep fatality since the fence was constructed. I believe this speaks volumes.

I am expressing my feelings as a resident of La Quinta and the current president of the Bighorn Institute.

I thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,  
Michael Dee

michael bromley

Fri, 11 Mar 2016 13:00:10 -0800

To: kbarrows@cvag.org

La Quinta sheep fence

---

I was sorry not have been able to attend the meeting last night, but understand that you are taking public comment on the issue via email.

I am a part time resident of the Coachella Valley with a home at 73-361 Foxtail Lane in Palm Desert. I have a strong interest in mountain sheep, the great outdoors and belong to and contribute to various conservation organizations. Wild animals do not belong in an urban setting, but they are opportunistic, and like humans, are to some degree lazy. When I hike the Eisenhower Mountain trail in the Living Desert and look down at all the golf communities west of Highway 111 I say to myself "If I were a sheep why would I try to scratch out a living eating cactus when I could go down there and luxuriate in all the green stuff?"

The same rational applies in La Quinta. The urban areas have grown to be adjacent to the mountains and sheep habitat. The sheep are tempted to an easier life although they are well suited to living and thriving in their natural environment to which they are adapted and where they have lived for tens of thousands of years. Unfortunately they are not adapted to living in an urban environment. They fall into canals, get hit by cars, get chased and perhaps bitten by dogs, concentrate in small areas (such as golf courses) where they can pick up diseases much more easily than if they were dispersed, eat vegetation that they are not suited to (including oleander, which is poisonous to them) and pick up parasites from irrigated soils.

The Peninsular Desert Bighorn sheep is listed as an endangered species, which means we humans have a special responsibility to them. As I understand it there is no viable alternative, other than a fence, to keep the sheep off the golf courses and urban areas of La Quinta which have encroached on their habitat than a fence. The same situation was confronted by Rancho Mirage. La Quinta needs to adopt the same solution, which is, as I understand it, the only viable solution determined by various environmental studies.

I certainly understand there is a cost involved in building a fence, but the current situation is destructive to the sheep herd. Unless the animals are protected they will die. I urge the City of La Quinta to act responsibly to preserve this endangered species.

If you have any questions of me regarding this matter I can be reached at my email address listed below.

--

**MICHAEL BROMLEY**, [mr2944@gmail.com](mailto:mr2944@gmail.com)



-----Original Message-----

From: Mary Cone [<mailto:laconemedico@aol.com>]

Sent: Thursday, March 24, 2016 11:12 AM

To: Katie Barrows <[kbarrows@cvag.org](mailto:kbarrows@cvag.org)>

Cc: Bighorn Institute <[bi@bighorninstitute.org](mailto:bi@bighorninstitute.org)>

Subject: Fence

These magnificent animals need to be protected and saved for future generations. Please, help us accomplish this.

Mary Cone

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** Mark Jorgensen [<mailto:mjorgensen1951@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Tuesday, March 22, 2016 1:31 PM

**To:** Katie Barrows <[kbarrows@cvag.org](mailto:kbarrows@cvag.org)>

**Cc:** Tom Kirk <[tkirk@cvag.org](mailto:tkirk@cvag.org)>; Randy Botta <[randy.botta@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:randy.botta@wildlife.ca.gov)>; Jim DeForge <[bi@bighorninstitute.org](mailto:bi@bighorninstitute.org)>

**Subject:** Fencing to Protect Desert Bighorn Sheep

TO:

Katie Barrows  
Director of Environmental Resource  
Coachella Valley Association of Governments

Katie Barrows:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the issue of an exclusionary fence adjacent to golf courses in La Quinta. The issue of construction of fencing to protect the native population of desert bighorn sheep in this segment of the Santa Rosa Mountains is long overdue and one which I support 100%.

I have studied the desert bighorn sheep of the Santa Rosas, San Jacintos, and all of Anza-Borrego Desert State Park for almost fifty years. I recently wrote a book on bighorn of the southwest United States and northern Mexico entitled, *Desert Bighorn Sheep, Wilderness Icon* to bring the plight of desert bighorn sheep to the forefront of our citizens and visitors.

The interface between wild lands and urban areas has become an attractive nuisance and dangerous zone for wildlife, especially desert bighorn sheep. Studies conducted in Rancho Mirage and Cathedral City brought the dangers of urban landscapes and roadways to light and the many threats to bighorn sheep are indisputable. Further study is not warranted. It is clear that wild bighorn venture onto several golf courses in the La Quinta area and that the human landscapes are dangerous to desert bighorn. The presence of green grass, canals, oleanders, roads, domestic dogs, wire garden fences, and swimming pools are all threats to the health and welfare of wild sheep. Fencing along the base of the mountain slope in Rancho Mirage and Cathedral City has proven an effective barrier which has saved the lives of desert bighorn. Numerous bighorn sheep succumbed to poisonous oleanders, were killed by motor vehicles, were infected with internal parasites, and were even documented drowning in a swimming pool and straggled by single-wire garden fencing.

Several desert bighorn sheep have died in the area being considered for fencing, from drowning and oleander poisoning. We need no further study to determine that building a fence, acceptable to bighorn and residents alike, is the solution which needs to be pursued without further delay.

The comments made by some that the bighorn will suffer from lack of food and water if fenced out of the golf course communities are without scientific foundation. These comment give no consideration to the fact that the desert bighorn has resided in the desert southwest for more than 250,000 years without supplemental feeding by humans. The bighorn will continue to make

their living in the Santa Rosa Mountains well after the proper fencing is constructed to protect them from the many dangers of civilization.

I urge CVAG to fully support the concept of fencing to keep wild desert bighorn off the golf courses of La Quinta and to pitch in politically and financially to the construction of the project.

Sincerely,

Mark C. Jorgensen  
Author and  
Retired Superintendent of Anza-Borrego Desert State Park

-----Original Message-----

From: linda rivkin [mailto:scifhigheredu@sbcglobal.net]

Sent: Monday, March 28, 2016 6:44 PM

To: Katie Barrows <kbarrows@cvag.org>

Subject: Build a fence for goodness sake!

Bighorns don't belong in residential developments! We all know this.

Their longevity in the Coachella

Valley depends upon fencing. It works in the Mirada Estates. Fence PGA  
and let it work their too!

Linda Rivkin

31 HillCrest Dr

Rancho Mirage, Ca 92270

Sent from my iPhone



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Date: March 7, 2016

To: Katie Barrows

From: Ronald Griesinger  
Fire Safety Specialist Riverside County Fire,  
Serving the City of La Quinta

Subject: La Quinta Peninsular Bighorn Sheep Barrier Project

This letter regards conditions concerning the above referenced case. The Fire Department requires gates be provided at all trail head locations in accordance with the City of La Quinta Municipal Code and/or the Riverside County Fire Department Fire Protection Standards.

Ronald Griesinger  
Fire Safety Specialist





# AGUA CALIENTE BAND OF CAHUILLA INDIANS

TRIBAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION



03-069-2015-001

March 02, 2016

[VIA EMAIL TO:kbarrows@cvag.org]  
Coachella Valley Conservation Commission (CVCC)  
Ms. Katie Barrows  
73-710 Fred Waring Drive, Suite 200  
Palm Desert, CA 92260

## **Re: La Quinta Peninsula Bighorn Sheep Barrier**

Dear Ms. Katie Barrows,

The Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians (ACBCI) appreciates your efforts to include the Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO) in the La Quinta Peninsular Big Horn Sheep Fencing project. The project area is not located within the boundaries of the ACBCI Reservation. However, it is within the Tribe's Traditional Use Area (TUA). A records check of the ACBCI registry identified previous surveys in the area that were positive for the presence of cultural resources. For this reason, the ACBCI THPO requests the following:

- \*A cultural resources inventory of the project area by a qualified archaeologist prior to any development activities in this area.
- \*A copy of the records search with associated survey reports and site records from the information center.
- \*Copies of any cultural resource documentation (report and site records) generated in connection with this project.
- \*The presence of an approved Native American Cultural Resource Monitor(s) during any ground disturbing activities (including archaeological testing and surveys). Should buried cultural deposits be encountered, the Monitor may request that destructive construction halt and the Monitor shall notify a Qualified Archaeologist (Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines) to investigate and, if necessary, prepare a mitigation plan for submission to the State Historic Preservation Officer and the Agua Caliente Tribal Historic Preservation Office.
- \*The presence of an archaeologist that meets the Secretary of Interior's standards during any ground disturbing activities.

Again, the Agua Caliente appreciates your interest in our cultural heritage. If you have questions or require additional information, please call me at (760)699-6829. You may also email me at [acbc-thpo@aguacaliente.net](mailto:acbc-thpo@aguacaliente.net).

Cordially,



# AGUA CALIENTE BAND OF CAHUILLA INDIANS

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TRIBAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION



*Katie Croft*

Katie Croft  
Archaeologist  
Tribal Historic Preservation Office  
AGUA CALIENTE BAND  
OF CAHUILLA INDIANS

5401 DINAH SHORE DRIVE, PALM SPRINGS, CA 92264

T 760/699/6800 F 760/699/6924 [WWW.AGUACALIENTE-NSN.GOV](http://WWW.AGUACALIENTE-NSN.GOV)



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---

74-900 Highway 111 Suite 211, Indian Wells, CA 92210 Tel: 760.779.1313 Fax: 760.340.4834

March 28, 2016

**By Email to [kbarrows@cvag.org](mailto:kbarrows@cvag.org) and U.S. Mail**

Katie Barrows  
Director of Environmental Resources  
Coachella Valley Association of Governments  
73-710 Fred Waring Drive  
Palm Desert, CA 92260

**Re: OBJECTIONS OF THE QUARRY CLUB AT LA QUINTA TO  
The "La Quinta Bighorn Sheep Barrier Project" (the "Project")**

Dear Ms. Barrows:

Thank you for meeting recently with representatives of my client, The Quarry Club at La Quinta, and me concerning the above Project. This letter confirms my clients' verbal comments and concerns about, and objections to, the Project, as expressed in our meetings.


Please be advised that the Club and its members completely and wholeheartedly object to this Project. If carried out any further, the Project risks the property values of the Club, its individual members, and the home owners within The Quarry. The Project is ill-advised, over broad, not based upon current statistics or factual data, and not reasonable in its scope or effect.

The Project will impair the property rights of all owners of land and personal property near the fencing proposed. The Club requests that the agency representatives reconsider proceeding with this Project.

Although this summary is intended to be provided by the public comment deadline of today's date, the Club and all property owners within The Quarry reserve all rights and remedies related to the Project and their land and other property, and do not consent to, concede or waive the rights to object to, any and all governmental activity or other actions taken concerning the Project.

Please acknowledge receipt of these Objections. Thank you for your attention to the above.

Very truly yours,

  
KAREN J. SLOAT

Cc: Kendale Trahan, Manager, The Quarry Club at La Quinta

Comment Letter from  
Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians

In response to the Notice of Preparation for the La Quinta Peninsular Bighorn Sheep Barrier Draft EIR, the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission (CVCC) received a comment letter dated March 22, 2016 from Joseph Ontiveros, Cultural Resource Director of the Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians in San Jacinto, California. Mr. Ontiveros requested that the original letter not be published in the DEIR, but agreed a summary could be published instead.

The comment letter stated that the Project is outside the existing Soboba reservation, but does fall within the bounds of their Tribal Traditional Use Areas. The Soboba Band did not have any specific concerns regarding known cultural resources in the Project area, but requested that appropriate consultation continue to take place between concerned tribes, project proponents, and local agencies. It also requested that approved Native American Monitor(s) be present during any future ground disturbing proceedings and recommended contacting the Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians due to their proximity to the Project.



South Coast  
Air Quality Management District  
21865 Copley Drive, Diamond Bar, CA 91765-4178  
(909) 396-2000 • [www.aqmd.gov](http://www.aqmd.gov)

February 26, 2016

[kbarrows@cvag.org](mailto:kbarrows@cvag.org)  
Katie Barrows  
Coachella Valley Conservation Commission  
73-710 Fred Waring Dr., Suite 200  
Palm Desert, CA 92260

**Notice of Preparation of a CEQA Document for the  
La Quinta Peninsular Bighorn Sheep Barrier**

The South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) staff appreciates the opportunity to comment on the above-mentioned document. The SCAQMD staff's comments are recommendations regarding the analysis of potential air quality impacts from the proposed project that should be included in the Draft EIR. Please send the SCAQMD a copy of the CEQA document upon its completion. Note that copies of the Draft EIR that are submitted to the State Clearinghouse are not forwarded to the SCAQMD. Please forward a copy of the Draft EIR directly to SCAQMD at the address in our letterhead. **In addition, please send with the Draft EIR all appendices or technical documents related to the air quality and greenhouse gas analyses and electronic versions of all air quality modeling and health risk assessment files. These include original emission calculation spreadsheets and modeling files (not Adobe PDF files). Without all files and supporting air quality documentation, the SCAQMD will be unable to complete its review of the air quality analysis in a timely manner. Any delays in providing all supporting air quality documentation will require additional time for review beyond the end of the comment period.**

**Air Quality Analysis**

The SCAQMD adopted its California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Air Quality Handbook in 1993 to assist other public agencies with the preparation of air quality analyses. The SCAQMD recommends that the Lead Agency use this Handbook as guidance when preparing its air quality analysis. Copies of the Handbook are available from the SCAQMD's Subscription Services Department by calling (909) 396-3720. More recent guidance developed since this Handbook was published is also available on SCAQMD's website here: [http://www.aqmd.gov/home/regulations/ceqa/air-quality-analysis-handbook/ceqa-air-quality-handbook-\(1993\)](http://www.aqmd.gov/home/regulations/ceqa/air-quality-analysis-handbook/ceqa-air-quality-handbook-(1993)). SCAQMD staff also recommends that the Lead Agency use the CalEEMod land use emissions software. This software has recently been updated to incorporate up-to-date state and locally approved emission factors and methodologies for estimating pollutant emissions from typical land use development. CalEEMod is the only software model maintained by the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA) and replaces the now outdated URBEMIS. This model is available free of charge at: [www.caleemod.com](http://www.caleemod.com).

The Lead Agency should identify any potential adverse air quality impacts that could occur from all phases of the project and all air pollutant sources related to the project. Air quality impacts from both construction (including demolition, if any) and operations should be calculated. Construction-related air quality impacts typically include, but are not limited to, emissions from the use of heavy-duty equipment from grading, earth-loading/unloading, paving, architectural coatings, off-road mobile sources (e.g., heavy-duty construction equipment) and on-road mobile sources (e.g., construction worker vehicle trips, material transport trips). Operation-related air quality impacts may include, but are not limited to, emissions from stationary sources (e.g., boilers), area sources (e.g., solvents and coatings), and vehicular trips (e.g., on- and off-road tailpipe emissions and entrained dust). Air quality impacts from indirect sources, that is, sources that generate or attract vehicular trips should be included in the analysis.

The SCAQMD has also developed both regional and localized significance thresholds. The SCAQMD staff requests that the Lead Agency quantify criteria pollutant emissions and compare the results to the recommended regional significance thresholds found here: <http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/ceqa/handbook/scaqmd-air-quality-significance-thresholds.pdf>. In addition to analyzing regional air quality impacts, the SCAQMD staff recommends calculating localized air quality impacts and comparing the results to localized significance thresholds (LSTs). LST's can be used in addition to the recommended regional significance thresholds as a second indication of air quality impacts when preparing

a CEQA document. Therefore, when preparing the air quality analysis for the proposed project, it is recommended that the Lead Agency perform a localized analysis by either using the LSTs developed by the SCAQMD or performing dispersion modeling as necessary. Guidance for performing a localized air quality analysis can be found at: <http://www.aqmd.gov/home/regulations/ceqa/air-quality-analysis-handbook/localized-significance-thresholds>.

In the event that the proposed project generates or attracts vehicular trips, especially heavy-duty diesel-fueled vehicles, it is recommended that the Lead Agency perform a mobile source health risk assessment. Guidance for performing a mobile source health risk assessment ("*Health Risk Assessment Guidance for Analyzing Cancer Risk from Mobile Source Diesel Idling Emissions for CEQA Air Quality Analysis*") can be found at: <http://www.aqmd.gov/home/regulations/ceqa/air-quality-analysis-handbook/mobile-source-toxics-analysis>. An analysis of all toxic air contaminant impacts due to the use of equipment potentially generating such air pollutants should also be included.

In addition, guidance on siting incompatible land uses (such as placing homes near freeways) can be found in the California Air Resources Board's *Air Quality and Land Use Handbook: A Community Perspective*, which can be found at the following internet address: <http://www.arb.ca.gov/ch/handbook.pdf>. CARB's Land Use Handbook is a general reference guide for evaluating and reducing air pollution impacts associated with new projects that go through the land use decision-making process.

### **Mitigation Measures**

In the event that the project generates significant adverse air quality impacts, CEQA requires that all feasible mitigation measures that go beyond what is required by law be utilized during project construction and operation to minimize or eliminate these impacts. Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines §15126.4 (a)(1)(D), any impacts resulting from mitigation measures must also be discussed. Several resources are available to assist the Lead Agency with identifying possible mitigation measures for the project, including:

- Chapter 11 of the SCAQMD *CEQA Air Quality Handbook*
- SCAQMD's CEQA web pages at: <http://www.aqmd.gov/home/regulations/ceqa/air-quality-analysis-handbook/mitigation-measures-and-control-efficiencies>.
- CAPCOA's *Quantifying Greenhouse Gas Mitigation Measures* available here: <http://www.capcoa.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/CAPCOA-Quantification-Report-9-14-Final.pdf>.
- SCAQMD's Rule 403 – Fugitive Dust, and the Implementation Handbook for controlling construction-related emissions
- Other measures to reduce air quality impacts from land use projects can be found in the SCAQMD's Guidance Document for Addressing Air Quality Issues in General Plans and Local Planning. This document can be found at the following internet address: <http://www.aqmd.gov/docs/default-source/planning/air-quality-guidance/complete-guidance-document.pdf>.

### **Data Sources**

SCAQMD rules and relevant air quality reports and data are available by calling the SCAQMD's Public Information Center at (909) 396-2039. Much of the information available through the Public Information Center is also available via the SCAQMD's webpage (<http://www.aqmd.gov>).

The SCAQMD staff is available to work with the Lead Agency to ensure that project emissions are accurately evaluated and mitigated where feasible. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Jack Cheng, Air Quality Specialist by e-mail at [jcheng@aqmd.gov](mailto:jcheng@aqmd.gov) or by phone at (909) 396-2448.

Sincerely,

*Jillian Wong*

Jillian Wong, Ph.D.  
Program Supervisor  
Planning, Rule Development & Area Sources





# Bighorn Institute

*Dedicated to the conservation of the world's wild sheep through research and education*

*A nonprofit  
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March 28, 2016

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*Legal Counsel*

Katie Barrows

Director of Environmental Resources

Coachella Valley Association of Governments

73-710 Fred Waring Dr. Ste #200

Palm Desert, CA 92260

Dear Katie:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit public comments for the La Quinta Peninsular bighorn sheep barrier project. As you know, bighorn rams have been utilizing the golf courses in La Quinta since 2007 and ewes and lambs joined the rams in 2012. Unfortunately, nothing was done to deter the sheep from utilizing the golf courses so 9 years later, there is a group of at least 30 adult bighorn (and this year 15 lambs) that are chronically habituated to coming down to the golf courses daily. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and California Department of Fish and Wildlife wrote a joint letter February 28, 2014, stating that bighorn were utilizing La Quinta golf courses as a source of artificial food and water and that pursuant to the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP), a "barrier" must be built to keep bighorn from accessing these urban areas. This letter serves to fully support the need for this barrier, more specifically, an 8 feet high chain-link fence similar to the one built in Rancho Mirage.

There have been 7 known bighorn sheep deaths since August 2012 that are the result of bighorn sheep coming down to the La Quinta golf courses (Traditions, SilverRock, PGA West and The Quarry). Four bighorn have drowned in the Coachella canal, 1 ram ate poisonous nonnative oleander, 1 ram was hit and killed by a car on Jefferson and 1 lamb was moribund on SilverRock and had to be collected and euthanized due to illness. In addition to these deaths, another lamb was picked up illegally from PGA West due to a "limp" and is now sentenced to a life in captivity so at least 8 bighorn have been lost from this population since 2012. Again, these are only the deaths we know of; most of these bighorn are

unmarked. For instance, other bighorn could have eaten oleander and died away from the urban area and go undetected. The MSHCP is not permitted for lethal take and yet there have been 8 incidents of take so far and no rush on a barrier to keep the sheep out of the urban area, despite a letter from the wildlife agencies requiring such.

There have been a number of other urban-related incidents with bighorn coming down to the golf courses. Bighorn sheep were documented in the streets of La Quinta between April 2014 and August 2015 on at least 11 separate occasions, 6 of which involved the police (April 24, 2014, April 30, 2014, May 11, 2014, August 10, 2014, April 7, 2015, and August 5, 2015). Bighorn strayed miles from the mountains as far as Griffin Ranch to the east and the Indian Wells Tennis Gardens to the north. Police had to stop traffic on Hwy 111 on April 7, 2015 to get a young ram back to the mountains from the Tennis Gardens. Bighorn roaming the streets is not only a bighorn safety issue, but clearly, a human safety issue as evidenced by the ram hit and killed by a car. The driver's airbags deployed and she is very fortunate to have walked away without injury. This is a serious concern because until the bighorn are fenced out of the golf courses, they will continue to stray away from the mountains and present bighorn and human safety issues.

Four bighorn have drowned in the Coachella canal, but there have been at least another 3 bighorn that have fallen into the canal and either got out on their own or were rescued. In August of 2014 and 2015, and March 2016, a bighorn fell into the Coachella canal. The canal continues to be an immediate threat to the safety of the sheep.

In addition to the incidents described above, we have documented increased disease with bighorn in urban environments. They can get intestinal parasites from the watered lawns, which don't persist in a native desert environment. In 2015, many of the lambs on the golf courses showed signs of illness and only 2 lambs survived to yearling age. That is exceptionally low lamb recruitment. The cycle of disease will likely repeat itself as the sheep congregate in unusually large

groups to eat on the golf course, which promotes disease transmission. Many of the adult bighorn using the golf course also show signs of illness. Again, this illness will likely be passed down to the lambs and we anticipate continued low lamb recruitment for sheep using the golf courses. By utilizing the golf courses, the bighorn can ingest fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides that are unnatural, and likely unsafe, to their diet.

There needs to be a bighorn barrier (i.e., fence) as soon as possible to discontinue the negative effects on the endangered Peninsular bighorn sheep in La Quinta. Unless the areas around Traditions, SilverRock, PGA West and The Quarry are all fenced, the sheep will work around to the open areas. In Appendix F of The Recovery Plan for bighorn sheep in the Peninsular Ranges, California, 8 feet high chain-link or a functional equivalent is the fencing recommendation to keep bighorn out of the urban area. This is the height and predominant material of the Rancho Mirage fence that has proven successful since October 2002. The sheep should not lose any more habitat as the fence should follow the toe of slope and maximize habitat available to the sheep. Topography should be considered for areas that may require a higher than 8 feet fence to prevent bighorn from re-entering the urban area. Also, there should not be any vegetation planted along the fence that may serve as an attractant to draw the sheep down to the urban area.

Regarding other alternatives, we know of no other equal alternative to an 8 feet high chain-link fence. To fence off the canal bridges merely keeps bighorn from crossing the canal, but doesn't prevent them utilizing the golf course areas that are on the mountain side of the Coachella canal along all four previously mentioned golf courses. Adding water sources will not prevent bighorn from coming down to eat on the golf courses. They come all year long, not only during summer when they are dependent on drinking water. If water sources are added in addition to fencing, they should be in areas that will not attract the bighorn down to the urban areas. Bighorn sheep are herbivores and eat mesquite so planting a mesquite barrier is illogical and counterproductive to keep an animal out that eats the barrier material. As far as an electric fence, we have documented bighorn being strangled in single-wire illegal fencing and we highly recommend against any fencing material other than chain-link or wrought iron (with gaps less than

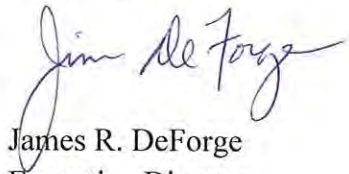


Page 4

4.3" per the Recovery Plan) fencing. These fence materials have been proven as safe for keeping bighorn sheep out of the urban areas of Rancho Mirage for the past 14 years.

We are happy to help provide expertise with the fence alignment as needed since we have years of experience with bighorn and sheep fencing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Jim DeForge". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jim" and last name "DeForge" clearly distinguishable.

James R. DeForge  
Executive Director  
Research Biologist

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2000. Recovery plan for bighorn sheep in the Peninsular Ranges, California. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Portland, OR 251 pp.

March 25, 2016

**Via E-mail: [kbarrows@cvag.org](mailto:kbarrows@cvag.org)**

Ms. Katie Barrows  
Coachella Valley Conservation Commission  
73-710 Fred Waring Drive, Suite 200  
Palm Desert, California 92260

**Re: Notice of Preparation of a Draft EIR for La Quinta Peninsular Bighorn  
Sheep Barrier, City of La Quinta**

Dear Ms. Barrows:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the scope and content of the EIR for the La Quinta Peninsular Bighorn Sheep Barrier, City of La Quinta. These comments are submitted on behalf of the Sierra Club. The Sierra Club is a California non-profit corporation dedicated to the conservation and preservation of the nation's natural resources. The Sierra Club and its members utilize the natural, scenic and biological resources of the Coachella Valley through their corporate and individual activities including scientific research, planning, education, and recreation.

Sierra Club supports the overall purpose of the proposed Project to prevent harm to Peninsular bighorn sheep, but is concerned that the Project and associated EIR not be used as a means for the City, the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission, or existing developments to delay and/or avoid entirely their obligation to construct fencing to keep bighorn from entering their properties. Specifically, there are several projects that have been constructed after undergoing environmental review that included mitigation measures requiring construction of barrier fencing if bighorn sheep entered into the project sites. For these projects, barrier fencing is required now because bighorn sheep are entering the project sites and "take" has or is likely to occur.

Areas Of Practice

Public Agency

Land Use &  
Environmental

Real Estate

Estate Planning &  
Administration

Business

Litigation

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Further environmental review is not required for construction of these barrier fences because they have already been the subject of an environmental review process. Thus, the Project should be limited to consideration of barrier fencing where such has not already been considered and made a mitigation requirement for existing developments. With these thoughts in mind, please consider the following additional comments.

The Initial Study ("IS") states "The purpose of the proposed Project is to prevent continuing impacts to sheep from urban-based threats associated with development adjoining sheep habitat." (IS, Page 2). The Sierra Club supports this purpose to the extent it is limited to areas where barrier fencing is not already required by existing mitigation measures. For projects that have existing mitigation measures requiring construction of barrier fencing, further environmental review is not required. The barrier fencing mitigation measures were imposed with certification of environmental review for the projects. Further delay of this required barrier fences violates the conditions of approval for the projects and is causing or likely to cause "takes" of bighorn sheep in violation of state and federal laws.

Peninsular bighorn sheep are a fully protected mammal and no "take" (meaning no death) is permitted<sup>1</sup>. Accordingly, all golf courses, residential developments, hotels and other projects that were previously approved by the City of La Quinta were approved based on an assumption that no "take", would result from project approval<sup>2</sup>. To avoid impacts to bighorn sheep, should they begin to utilize the developed areas for projects located adjacent to sheep habitat, the City of La Quinta required a sheep barrier as a mitigation measure, such as the mitigation measure for the Quarry and Silverrock<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> *Fish and Game Code 4700. (a) (1) Except as provided in this section, Section 2081.7, or Section 2835, a fully protected mammal may not be taken or possessed at any time. No provision of this code or any other law shall be construed to authorize the issuance of a permit or license to take a fully protected mammal, and no permit or license previously issued shall have any force or effect for that purpose.*

*...(b) The following are fully protected mammals:*

*...(2) Bighorn sheep (Ovis Canadensis)....*

<sup>2</sup> *As identified in Biological Resource Mitigation Measure 2, a fence would be constructed to reduce potential adverse impacts to bighorn sheep by precluding access to the site. With the implementation of Biological Resource Mitigation Measure 2, the Modified Project would not adversely affect any sensitive natural community identified in the General Plan, the CVMSHCP policies and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) or US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). (Addendum to the Adopted Mitigated Negative Declaration for the SilverRock Resort Project Prepared for the City by Meridian October 2014)*

<sup>3</sup> Mitigation measure for Winchester Development, which has since become The Quarry;



Furthermore, the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan ("MSHCP") contained a requirement that a barrier be constructed within two years of notice that bighorn sheep are using artificial sources of food and water in unfenced areas of existing urban development within or near a Conservation area<sup>4</sup>. Such a notice was provided on February 24, 2014, and thus, the two-year clock has expired. Time is of the essence because numerous sheep deaths have already been documented as a direct result of sheep wandering into developments adjacent to bighorn sheep habitat. It is likely that other sheep have died or become ill, but that those deaths and illnesses escaped notice since only a handful of sheep are collared in this area. In addition, it appears that use of developed areas is affecting the ability of lambs to survive, as lamb survival has been

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*30. If Bighorn Sheep enter onto the Project Site, an 8-foot fence (or the functional equivalent) between the development and the hillside, if any, shall be constructed. The gaps should be 11 centimeters (4.3 inches) or less. If determined necessary, the developer shall construct temporary fencing while permanent fencing is constructed. The fence shall not contain gaps in which bighorn sheep can be entangled. If the developer transfer or disposes of any of the property adjacent to the hillside, the developer shall reserve an easement sufficient for the construction of fencing if needed in the future. (Resolution No. 2002-134 Specific Plan 98-032, Amendment No. 1 Winchester Development Adopted September 17, 2002 ).*

Similar Mitigation Measure adopted in 2002 for Silverrock:

*2. If Bighorn Sheep enter into the Project Site, an 8-foot fence (or the functional equivalent) between the development and the hillside shall be constructed. The gaps should be 11 centimeters (4.3 inches) or less. If determined necessary, the City shall construct temporary fencing while permanent fencing is constructed. The fence shall not contain gaps in which Bighorn Sheep can be entangled. If the Department transfer or disposes of any of the property adjacent to the hillside, the Department shall reserve an easement sufficient for the construction of fencing if needed in the future. (2002 MND for the Silverrock Resort)*

<sup>4</sup> *Section 8.2.4.1 General Ongoing Management*

*Within the Reserve Lands, ongoing management actions will include:*

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*14. If the USFWS or CDFG provides written notice to the CVCC or Local Permittee that Peninsular bighorn sheep are using artificial sources of food or water in unfenced areas of existing urban Development within or near a Conservation Area, the CVCC (unless otherwise agreed to by the applicable Local Permittee) shall cause to be constructed a barrier to sheep access to cure the problem within 2 years of such notice. The location of this barrier (i.e., an 8-foot fence or functional equivalent) shall be determined by CVCC based on its ability to obtain permission/access to the necessary lands. If placement of a barrier must occur on other public lands (e.g., BLM, CDFG), CVCC will coordinate with these other agencies as appropriate. (MSHCP)*





Ms. Katie Barrows  
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Page 4

reduced for sheep in the La Quinta area, where sheep regularly visit developed areas<sup>5</sup>. Accordingly, it is imperative that the fence be constructed as soon as possible.

The Sierra Club therefore opposes any attempts to expand the scope of the Project in a manner that allows developers to delay and/or avoid entirely implementation of existing mitigation measures that were the subject of prior environmental review. Further, the Project must not be used as a vehicle to revisit non-fencing alternative that have already been deemed infeasible and would be inconsistent with existing mitigation measures. The previous mitigation measures and MSHCP requirements have already narrowed the potential alternatives that can be considered. (See footnotes 2 through 4 of this letter) Thus, the Sierra Club does not agree with various statements within the IS that indicate an attempt to "widen" the scope of the Project, and its associated environmental review to consider alternatives such as:

- "A variety of barriers and other methods"
- "possible alternatives to fencing"
- "Alternative alignments"
- "development and implementation of a plan"
- "to collect additional information on the local population of sheep and how they use and move through the subject habitat"
- "to examine other alternatives to a fence, including alternative barrier design and/or location, habitat enhancements, and translocation of the local ewe group."

In fact, the IS makes it sound like the project is a "feasibility study" rather than a project to reduce sheep mortality.

*Alternative barrier routes will be investigated based upon a screening process that ensures all relevant functional and safety goals are met. The potential beneficial and adverse impacts associated with barrier solutions will be fully described, including the limited or area-specific application of the barrier solution. Alternative barrier types, including vegetation, electronic barriers, and canal bridge gates will also be evaluated. (IS, page 3)*

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<sup>5</sup> The sheep in La Quinta that utilize the golf courses also did not have good lamb survival. While many lambs were born, most showed signs of illness and subsequently died. We know of only 2 lambs that made it to yearling age in that area. (Bighorn Institute Website)



The Sierra Club questions the use of “relevant functional and safety goals” as the screening process for evaluation of alternatives, as these goals have not been identified at this time, and it is not clear that these goals will be the most environmentally protective for the sheep.

Although the MSHCP requirement used the term “barrier, or functional equivalent”, both the State and Federal Fish and Wildlife Agencies have indicated “We are not aware of any functional equivalents to fencing at this time” (Letter to Tom Kirk, CVCC and Frank Spavacek, City of La Quinta, February 24, 2014). Any alternatives to the “tried and true” fence would be experimental in nature, and thus, if they are not successful in keeping sheep from entering the developed areas, would result in further impacts and “take” of sheep. Because the sheep are fully protected, any consideration of alternatives that allow “take” or risk “potential take” in any form must be rejected and cannot be permitted. Accordingly, any “functional alternatives” to a fence would be infeasible because they will not achieve the objective of reducing harm to bighorn sheep.

In addition, we provide the following issues that must be considered within the EIR:

1. The fence should be at the lowest elevation possible, but no higher than the toe of slope. Any proposed barrier location must be evaluated in terms of whether the location reduces habitat, especially foraging habitat for sheep, and particularly foraging habitat for lactating ewes. Under no circumstances should the barrier encroach further into sheep habitat above the toe of slope.
2. The fence should be high enough to prevent sheep from crossing it. Any barrier height should be evaluated in terms of the surrounding terrain, and whether the height is sufficient to ensure that sheep cannot jump over the fence.
3. The barrier should be a chain link or wrought iron fence, which have proven to be successful in reducing sheep mortality. Any barrier materials should be evaluated based on evidence of success in providing a barrier for sheep. The Coachella Valley already has examples of fencing materials that have been successful, and thus, materials that are not “tried and true” should be not be risked for the sake of aesthetics and/or cost.
4. Any vegetation proposed near the barrier should be evaluated in terms of whether the vegetation will attract sheep, or will act as cover for sheep predators.



Ms. Katie Barrows  
March 25, 2016  
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Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment on the scope of the EIR for this Project. Please include the undersigned on the mailing list to receive all updates and notices regarding this important project.

Very truly yours,

WORDEN WILLIAMS LLP

D. Wayne Brechtel, Esq.  
dwb@wordenwilliams.com

DWB:lg

cc: Client



## **La Quinta Peninsular Bighorn Sheep Barrier Project**

### **Community Public Scoping Meeting Summary**

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A Public Scoping Meeting for the “La Quinta Peninsular Bighorn Sheep Barrier Project” (project) was held on March 10, 2016 from 7:00 to 9:00 pm at La Quinta Chamber of Commerce located at 78-495 Calle Tampico, La Quinta CA 92253. The Coachella Valley Conservation Commission (CVCC) and Terra Nova Planning and Research, Inc. (Terra Nova) arranged and led the meeting. The meeting was held specifically to collect public input, and to address questions regarding the scope and environmental process of the project.

The meeting began with a project introduction from the Director of Environmental Resources, Katie Barrows, who is also a project manager for the proposed project. John Criste, principal planner at Terra Nova, provided a summary of the environmental process including environmental analysis and project scheduling. Presentations were accompanied by informational PowerPoints, which are provided in Attachment 2.

The bulk of the meeting was originally planned as an open house where the public would be able to review project exhibits and discuss the project with team members at individual information stations. However, the attendees preferred to hold the meeting as a community forum, where attendees would take turns asking questions or provide comments, and a member of the project team would verbally address the attendee.

### **Registration, Handouts, and Exhibits**

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Upon arrival at the Community Public Scoping Meeting, attendees were asked to sign in and were provided comment cards to fill out either during or at the end of the meeting. Attendees were allowed to fill out as many comment cards as they wished. Project team members were in attendance to answer questions and address additional comments.

Photographs of the meeting, sign-in sheets, and individual exhibit boards are provided in Attachment 2 of this report.

### **Project Team Members**

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Project team members in attendance include the following:

Katie Barrows – Coachella Valley Association of Governments - Director of Environmental Resources and Project Manager

Kathleen Brundige– Coachella Valley Association of Governments- Management Analyst

John Criste – Terra Nova Planning & Research, Inc., Principal Planner

Kelly Clark – Terra Nova Planning & Research, Inc., Associate Planner

Khadija Nadimi – Terra Nova Planning & Research, Inc., Assistant Planner

### **Attendance**

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A total of 45 people signed in at the beginning the scoping meeting. Participants included members of the community, City officials including City of La Quinta Mayor (Linda Evans), the Tradition Golf Club Community Association members, the Quarry and PGA West Golf Course residents, and other interested parties.



## **Public Comment Summary**

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During the Community Public Scoping Meeting, attendees were invited to provide comments and general input on the proposed project. Attendees had the option of leaving their completed comment sheets in drop boxes provided at the meeting, or verbalizing their comments to project staff.

A total of 49 written comments were received: seven (7) comment cards were received during the scoping meeting, 42 comments were received via email. Approximately 18 verbal comments/questions were recorded during the meeting and are summarized in Attachment 1. David Della Penta, the president of the Tradition Golf Club, presented the comments from the Club's legal committee at the meeting. The hard copy of which is given at the end of this report in Attachment 1. Please note that verbal comments/questions that were similar in content may have been summarized as one comment, thus resulting in a condensed number of verbal comments/questions recorded.

A summary of other comments received is provided in Attachment 1 of this report.

## **ATTACHMENT 1**

Public Comment Summary and photocopy of comment cards

La Quinta Peninsular Bighorn Sheep Barrier  
Community Public Scoping Meeting  
March 10, 2016



**La Quinta Peninsular Bighorn Sheep Barrier  
Comment Card**

**La Quinta  
Public Scoping Meeting 03/10/2016**

The La Quinta Peninsular Bighorn Sheep Barrier project is designed to protect the Peninsular Bighorn Sheep in La Quinta from urban hazards. During recent years, a number of Peninsular Bighorn Sheep (PBS) died from drowning, collisions with cars and from poisoning. To protect this population of PBS, the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission (CVCC) proposes to develop a barrier at the urban/wildland interface along the Santa Rosa Mountain foothills. CVCC welcomes your comments and suggestions as we begin to consider barrier alternatives and the environmental impacts associated with the project.

Patti Miller  
Name

rickpattipgawest@hotmail.com  
Email or Phone Number



**La Quinta Peninsular Bighorn Sheep Barrier  
Comment Card**

**La Quinta  
Public Scoping Meeting 03/10/2016**

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Heber Novak  
Name

HXhooked@dc.RR.com  
Email or Phone Number

No point in just building a fence in Silver Rock  
the sheep will just go on the other golf courses



**La Quinta Peninsular Bighorn Sheep Barrier  
Comment Card**

**La Quinta  
Public Scoping Meeting 03/10/2016**

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Kevin McCune  
Name

KEM711@SMAIL.COM  
Email or Phone Number



**La Quinta Peninsular Bighorn Sheep Barrier  
Comment Card**

**La Quinta  
Public Scoping Meeting 03/10/2016**

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M. NELSON  
Name

MATREO33@GMAIL.COM  
Email or Phone Number

BARRIERS ON ALL BRIDGES ACROSS THE CANAL WOULD PROBABLY  
TAKE CARE OF 99% OF THE PROBLEMS AT PGA WEST. THESE BARRIER  
COULD BE CATTLE GUARDS OR GATES. A SMALL FENCE ON THE  
MOUNTAIN SIDE OF THE CANAL WOULD BE ABLE TO KEEP THEM  
OUT OF THE CANAL.





**La Quinta Peninsular Bighorn Sheep Barrier  
Comment Card**

**La Quinta  
Public Scoping Meeting 03/10/2016**

The La Quinta Peninsular Bighorn Sheep Barrier project is designed to protect the Peninsular Bighorn Sheep in La Quinta from urban hazards. During recent years, a number of Peninsular Bighorn Sheep (PBS) died from drowning, collisions with cars and from poisoning. To protect this population of PBS, the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission (CVCC) proposes to develop a barrier at the urban/wildland interface along the Santa Rosa Mountain foothills. CVCC welcomes your comments and suggestions as we begin to consider barrier alternatives and the environmental impacts associated with the project.

Kathleen Shelley  
Name

kathleen.shelley@gmail.com  
Email or Phone Number

Please add me to your informational email lists



**La Quinta Peninsular Bighorn Sheep Barrier  
Comment Card**

**La Quinta  
Public Scoping Meeting 03/10/2016**

The La Quinta Peninsular Bighorn Sheep Barrier project is designed to protect the Peninsular Bighorn Sheep in La Quinta from urban hazards. During recent years, a number of Peninsular Bighorn Sheep (PBS) died from drowning, collisions with cars and from poisoning. To protect this population of PBS, the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission (CVCC) proposes to develop a barrier at the urban/wildland interface along the Santa Rosa Mountain foothills. CVCC welcomes your comments and suggestions as we begin to consider barrier alternatives and the environmental impacts associated with the project.

Dan Sturgill  
Name

dsturgill@verizon.net  
Email or Phone Number

In addition fencing stops them need for movement (cause fragmentation) and inbreeding.

\* The value of no fence overshadows the imply loses for the following: Per Ester Rubin's Recovery Plan (10/2000) Ewes during gestation need high nutrient grasses and during lactating (Auger 2000) Being at the foot of peninsular terrain provides excellent protection and refuge. The number of sheep have increased significantly over the last several years



**La Quinta Peninsular Bighorn Sheep Barrier  
Comment Card**

**La Quinta  
Public Scoping Meeting 03/10/2016**

**CVCC**

The La Quinta Peninsular Bighorn Sheep Barrier project is designed to ~~protect~~ the Peninsular Bighorn Sheep in La Quinta from urban hazards. During recent years, a number of Peninsular Bighorn Sheep (PBS) died from drowning, collisions with cars and from poisoning. To protect this population of PBS, the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission (CVCC) proposes to develop a barrier at the urban/wildland interface along the Santa Rosa Mountain foothills. CVCC welcomes your comments and suggestions as we begin to consider barrier alternatives and the environmental impacts associated with the project.

Richard Wood

Name

rich.wood@gmail

Email or Phone Number

Proportionately, These animals have similar  
losses in the wild. The course has actually  
sustained the herd during <sup>The current</sup> exceptional drought  
conditions.

3/10/2016

**Comments of the Legal Committee of the Tradition Golf Club, A non Profit Mutual Benefit Corporation, c/o Ms. Katie Barrows for review by the Coachella Valley Conservation Commission in connection with the Proposed La Quinta Big Horn Sheep Project**

**March 7, 2016**

**1. MADAM MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE COACHELLA VALLEY CONSERVATION COMMISSION.....**

- a. I AM DAVID DELLA PENTA, PRESIDENT OF TRADITION GOLF CLUB. I WANT TO THANK YOU FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS THE AUDIENCE RELATIVE TO THE PENINSULAR BIGHORN SHEEP.**

The following <sup>REMARKS</sup> ~~comments~~ are the comments of the Legal Committee of the Tradition Golf Club (The Club) and have not been adopted or approved by the Boards of Directors of the Club or the Tradition Community Association (TCA), or any of its residents:

- 1)The proposed chain link fencing is aesthetically impoverished and will, no doubt, be vigorously opposed by the Club, its members, the TCA and its residents.
- 2)The proposed routing of the barrier immediately adjacent to the Tradition Golf Course and numerous residences within the Tradition

Community will also, no doubt, be condemned by the Club, the TCA and the Tradition residents.

3)Mitigating factors that should be considered by the Coachella Conservation Commission to address and ameliorate these objections are as follows:

- a)We are not in favor of this option but, Rerouting the barrier on a more direct route South of the Club from the La Quinta Cove ,as feasible, given the topography of the Mountains.
- b) Placing a watering tank, or tanks, and salt licks in the remote part(s) of the Mountains South of the Tradition Golf Course providing a disincentive for the PBS to seek water from the Canal, the golf courses or the residents within the Cove.
- c)In combination with (b) above, using an electric fence along the route recommended in (a)



above, which would train the PBS not to cross that barrier keeping them well South of the Tradition Golf Course and Community and at much less cost than a chain link fence along the proposed route.

d) Completely eliminate any barriers within the private property depicted on the Commission's PBS Fence Concept Plan thereby:

- i. Reducing the uncertainty and excessive costs of acquiring access and construction easements across private property.
  - ii. Gaining free access and possible cost sharing from allied public conservation entities including the Federal Government.
- Additionally, Tradition Golf club will abide by the 1997 ruling abating our participation in any

financial obligation relative to this issue.

iii. Eliminating any public opposition to the PBS Barrier Plan.

4) Lastly, A chain link fence would create a barrier for rocks and debris during significant rainstorms causing a damming effect bursting the fence and creating flood hazards and erosion that would be inconsistent with the historical runoff patterns in the area and could very well create litigation in the event of another 100 year rainstorm, two of which were experienced in recent years.

Again, thank you for the time allotted to me this evening.

**CVCC La Quinta PBS Sheep Barrier  
Comment Letters**

	Date	Author	Residence (if stated)	Summary of Comments
<b>Scoping Meeting Comment Cards</b>				
1	3/10/16	Richard Wood (#1)		* Proportionately, PBS have similar losses in the wild. * The course has actually sustained the herd during the current exceptional drought conditions.
2	3/10/16	Kevin McCune		no comments, contact info. only
3	3/10/16	M. Nelson		*Barriers on all bridges across the canal would probably take care of 99% of the problems at PGA West...could be cattle guards or gates. *Small fence on mountain side of canal would keep them out of canal.
4	3/10/16	Helene Novak (?)		* No point just building a fence on SilverRock, the sheep will just go on the other golf courses.
5	3/10/16	Patti Miller		no comments, contact info. only
6	3/10/16	Kathleen Shelley		add me to your info. email lists
7	3/10/16	Dan Sturgill		* Fencing stops their need for movement, causes fragmentation, and inbreeding. *The value of no fence overshadows the implied loss for the following: Per Ester Rubin's Recovery Plan (20/2000), ewes during gestation need high nutrient grasses and during lactating (Wagner 2000), being at the foot of Peninsular terrain provides excellent protection and water. * The number of sheep have increased significantly over the last several years.
<b>Other Comments</b>				
8	3/8/16	Bruce Titus	Tacoma, WA	*Do we have boundaries of proposed fence?
9	3/8/16	Brian & Kristi Bailey	PGA West	* unique experience to watch sheep on and around their property * would hate to change the experience unless they are hurting people * sheep are very docile, are they hurting people? * why spend money on miles of fencing?
10	3/8/16	Dan Zeising		*Bighorn have rights, why do people feel they have the right to infringe on rights of animals? * we enjoy them, they enjoy us *now we have an ugly fence to look at

11	3/8/16	Rick & Cathy Herrick	PGA West	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* in favor of protecting PBS, but am concerned about aesthetics of fence</li> <li>*Fence may direct PBS to find other ways to find water &amp; food during hot summer months. Alternative paths may expose them to more densely populated areas &amp; busy streets.</li> <li>* Is there another method to co-exist with PBS?</li> </ul>
12	3/9/16	Karen Pelletier (#1)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* A lot of people are distrustful of the info. &amp; are familiar with when CDFW tried to bulldoze through the closure of Bump &amp; Grind trail. There was such a lack of substantiation that the courts/Governor ruled against CDFW to keep trail open 3/4 of the year.*To build support, your data should be unimpeachable.* Attached link about CDFW and Bump &amp; Grind trail (dated 2012).</li> </ul>
13	3/9/16	Aimee @ Bighorn Inst.		*Will LQ City Council members or CVCC attend the public scoping meeting on 3.10.16?
14	3/10/16	Judy Saner	PGA West	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* we should let the PBS be. Let Mother Nature take her course. We're in PBS habitat; they are in ours. It seems to work out well. No dumb wall is appropriate.</li> </ul>
15	3/10/16	Susan Fry	PGA West	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* herd has grown to 30, they seem to be doing well &amp; have adapted, putting up fence will make PBS find another home &amp; create hardship. Where will they go?</li> <li>*money needed to erect fence could be spent in more appropriate ways.</li> <li>*need to educate people in area who have no idea about animals &amp; their habitat.</li> <li>*sheep are fine, just leave them alone.</li> <li>*poisonous plants should be removed. Landscaping on Palmer course is to be redone in near future.</li> <li>*fencing is appropriate near highway. Otherwise, implement slow speed limits, sign warnings of PBS crossing, huge fines if PBS is hit by auto that go back into the sheep fund.</li> <li>*add steps to the canal to assist sheep in getting out</li> <li>*fence will block their escape route back to mountains, PBS will be more susceptible to be preyed upon.</li> <li>*PBS look healthy, content, herd is growing fine.</li> </ul>
16	3/10/16	Karen Pelletier (#2)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*it appears PBS population has exploded in recent yrs. Is there really a problem?</li> <li>*are there other alternatives to a fence, i.e. cattle guards, water source up the hill?</li> </ul>

17	3/10/16	Catherine & Rich Lane	La Quinta (not in project area)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* oppose fence &amp; believe in finding other alternatives, i.e. do nothing, hire trained dogs to keep sheep in designated areas (may still be on golf course, but not near housing), relocate sheep</li> <li>* fence will cause PBS to seek other areas but eventually mountains will be surrounded by housing, then what?</li> </ul>
18	3/10/16	Dennis Gallifent	La Quinta (not specified)	*fence project is like asking my neighbor to build fence around his house so my children will not play in his yard, does not make sense
19	3/10//16	Debi Snyder	PGA West	*strongly oppose barrier, have other solutions been discussed?
20	3/11/16	Michael Bromley	Palm Desert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Wild animals don't belong in urban setting but are opportunistic &amp; this makes PBS susceptible to urban hazards.</li> <li>*PBS are listed as endangered</li> <li>*there is no viable alternative other than a fence</li> <li>*current situation is destructive to sheep herd, if not protected they will die.</li> </ul>
21	3/11/16	Shirley Nichols	PGA West	*SilverRock fence has not kept PBS off the course, is ugly & detracts from natural beauty of area*huge cost to build yet another ugly fence*televised PGA golf tournaments highlights PBS for the world to see*re: eating unhealthy food or drowning...there are casualties among any animals
22	3/11/16	Michael Herman	La Quinta (not specified)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*you need an accurate count of sheep, including report on their present health</li> <li>*need to consider how fence will further impact future health of PBS, cutting them off from food &amp; water sources may do more harm than good</li> </ul>
23	3/11/16	Bruce Cathcart	LQ Palms Realty, Eisenhower Dr., LQ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*in favor of doing what is right for PBS</li> <li>*who will be responsible for paying for &amp; installing fence?</li> <li>*if private owners want fence, they should pay for it</li> <li>*it seems wildlife agencies want fence, so they should pay for &amp; build fence</li> </ul>
24	3/13/16	Anne Cheung (#1)		*Are the public comments posted anywhere? Do you know how many yearlings a man at the Scoping Meeting claimed to see at SilverRock? I'd like to add that info. to comments that I'll be submitting.

25	3/15/16	Dan Sturgill (#2)	Ballybunion, LQ (near or within PGA West?)	<p>*support NOT installing barrier based on info. in "The Recovery Plan" by Ester Rubin 2000 for use by USFWS &amp; other agencies</p> <p>*"The Recovery Plan" states:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.fragmentation caused by barriers block connectivity of habitat, leads to inbreeding &amp; depression, existing barriers in RM, IW, Hwy 74, I-10, other arterial roads already likely lead to connectivity problems</li> <li>2. ewes require high nutrient forage during gestation &amp; lactation...</li> <li>3.sheep deprived of adequate forage &amp; water have higher rate of disease</li> <li>4.forcing PBS to leave protection of steep barren mountain sides increases vulnerability to predation</li> </ol> <p>*fence will likely kill many more sheep, but deaths will be out of sight</p> <p>*flock has grown considerably in last 5 yrs</p> <p>*golf course grass &amp; water should not be discarded as wrong or unacceptable</p> <p>* as SilverRock builds out, the PBS pathway to major arterials will be eliminated</p>
26	3/25/16	Anne Cheung (#2)	PGA West	<p><b>INCLUDES GOOD PHOTO of PBS IN TRAFFIC</b> (and others)*why weren't photos or scientific data presented at Scoping Meeting?*she's observed &amp; photographed the herd since May 2015 on almost daily basis. Saw 3 lambs in May &amp; 4 lambs in June (photos provided). Only 2 female lambs have survived. *Most of this herd also goes to SilverRock.* EA (EIR) should include scientific data, including PBS safety &amp; public safety*I've seen many sheep near canal, in residential yards &amp; eating their plants, pooping on patios, getting into swimming pools, wandering streets (photo provided), breaking sliding glass doors, seen many people within 5 ft. of PBS</p>
27	3/24/16	Alexandra Sheldon		<p>*there's an urgent need for fence to prevent more drownings in canal</p> <p>*other hazards include eating plants that aren't good for them, being in the way of golfers, getting hit by golf balls.</p>

28	3/28/16	Blaine Carian (#1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Has DeAnza CC been approached about fencing its property from bighorn? If yes, what is specific design &amp; plan?</li> <li>*Are the sheep in LQ the same genetically as the sheep being hunted north of I-10?</li> <li>*Have the agencies performed a range survey to determine if PBS will survive with the food &amp; water available after fencing?</li> <li>*Has CVAG done a survey of properties that contain oleander? If so, which properties do &amp; do not contain oleander?</li> <li>*Have property owners been approached (HOAs) about removing oleander?</li> <li>*Do plans now exist for water troughs for the bighorn after fencing?</li> </ul>
29	3/28/16	Blaine Carian (#2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Can the agencies site any data that reflects massive die-offs if PBS are constantly exposed to high value food that is not natural, specifically as it pertains to DeAnza CC which has been visited by PBS for over 3 decades?</li> <li>*Please cite any oleander deaths at DeAnza CC. It's populated with oleander &amp; visited by PBS daily.</li> <li>*Do PBS populations dip when a wet year is followed by a dry year?</li> </ul>
30	3/23/16	Emma Baldwin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Please add barrier to protect PBS</li> <li>* I'm a wildlife rehabilitator. Fence would help people &amp; wildlife coexist.</li> </ul>
31	3/24/16	Joyce Peirce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Please build barrier or fence. It's criminal not to save the lives of animals, esp. endangered species.</li> </ul>
32	3/28/16	Linda Rivkin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*PBS don't belong in residential developments. Their longevity depends upon fencing.</li> <li>*The fence works in Mirada Estates. Fence PGA &amp; let it work there, too.</li> </ul>
33	3/24/16	Mary Cone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*PBS should be protected &amp; saved for future generations. Please help us accomplish this.</li> </ul>
34	3/25/16	Michael Dee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*It's extremely important that the courses be fenced in order for PBS to remain wild. *Rancho Mirage's fence has been up for over 10 yrs. and there hasn't been a PBS fatality since then. *LQ resident &amp; <b>current president of the Bighorn Institute.</b></li> </ul>

35	3/22/16	Mark Jorgensen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*The issue of constructing a fence to protect PBS is long overdue &amp; I support it 100%.</li> <li>*I've studied bighorn of Santa Rosas, San Jacintos and Anza-Borrego Desert State Park for almost 50 yrs. I wrote a book <b>"Desert Bighorn Sheep, Wilderness Icon."</b></li> <li>*Wildland-urban interface is an attractive nuisance &amp; dangerous zone for wildlife, esp PBS.</li> <li>*Studies conducted in RM and CC identified urban dangers. Further study is not warranted.</li> <li>Threats/dangers are clear - green grass, canals, oleanders, roads, domestic dogs, wire garden fences, swimming pools. Numerous deaths have been documents.</li> <li>*We need further study to determine that a fence is the solution to be pursued.</li> <li>*Desert bighorn have survived in the desert SW for more than 250,000 years w/out supplemental feeding by humans &amp; will continue to live in Santa Rosas after fencing is built.</li> <li>*I urge CVAG to support the fencing concept &amp; LQ to pitch in politically &amp; financially.</li> <li>*I'm the <b>Retired Superintendent of Anza-Borrego Desert State Park.</b></li> </ul>
36	3/26/16	Mike Rivkin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*The evidence that a barrier aids in bighorn survival rates is overwhelming &amp; incontrovertible.</li> <li>*Barrier has been mandated by wildlife authorities.</li> <li>*Do not allow developers &amp; those who regard federally endangered wildlife on their golf courses as "cute" to dictate the course of events.</li> <li>*This is a critical need &amp; should be met as soon as possible.</li> </ul>
37	3/28/16	Roland Burbank, DVM & Melinda Byers-Burbank, DVM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*We've been available for health/medical assistance for the Bighorn Institute's activities since 1985. I became a Board member in early 90s. We've seen how BI's commitment to sheep conservation has successfully influenced PBS's increase in numbers.</li> <li>*the RM chain-link fence has been extremely helpful in reducing sheep mortality &amp; has curtailed PBS access to Hwy 111 &amp; housing backyards.</li> <li>*in favor of proposed fence in LQ.</li> </ul>



38	3/28/16	Richard Wood (#2)	<p><b>INCLUDES 5 PHOTOS &amp; CDFW EMAIL CHAIN ABOUT SICK LAMBS AT SILVERROCK</b>*Do USFWS &amp; CDFW have statutory authority to mandate developers &amp; private property owners adjacent to SilverRock erect a barrier? *What is the summer range of this herd? *Did this herd exist at the time PBS were listed as endangered? *What is the recruitment on SilverRock &amp; how does it compare to bighorn in the wild? *Are PBS on SilverRock genetically identical to the ones being hunted on the north side of I-10? *Do wildlife agencies have a current count of PBS in region surrounding SilverRock as well as on SilverRock GC? At previous CVCC meeting last yr, Mr. Randy Botta of CDFW had no idea of PBS numbers at SilverRock. *Has Dr. Wehausen provided info on status of PBS population numbers at SilverRock? Comments at a CVCC meeting in Jan. indicate there's 0 recruitment. I believe this is false &amp; have photos indicating otherwise. Are wildlife agencies relying Bighorn Inst. for PBS counts? *Have wildlife agencies conducted a forage survey of area to determine impact of PBS starving due to lack of food after barrier construction? *Do wildlife agencies have plans to install artificial water troughs after barrier is built since there's no natural water nearby? There are at least 5 troughs adjacent to RM fence. How close is nearest permanent natural water source? *Do wildlife agencies intend to continue excluding LQ City Council from activities around SilverRock? (see his attached CDFW email chain about SilverRock sick lambs) *Has probability of barrier to dam stormwater debris &amp; cause flooding &amp; property damage been assessed? *Have detrimental effects of barrier on ingress/agree of other species been evaluated? *Has possibility of enhanced predation been evaluated (PBS will be trapped against fence)? *Has relocation been studied? Is is being successfully accomplished elsewhere?</p>
39	3/23/16	Sylvia & Neil Ender	<p>*Our fence at Thunderbird CC has been hugely successful in keeping PBS safe &amp; out of our urban areas. LQ needs the same fence.</p>

40	3/2/16	ACBCI	<p>*Project area is not in boundaries of ACBCI Reservation. *Project area IS within Tribe's Traditional Use Area. *Records check identified previous surveys that were positive for presence of cultural resources. *We request: cultural resources inventory of project area by archaeologist copy of records search with assoc. reports/records from the Info. Ctr. copies of cultural resource documentation generated in connection w/Project presence of Native Amer. Cultural Resource Monitor during ground disturbing activities presence of qualified archaeologist during ground disturbing activities</p>			
41	3/28/16	Bighorn Institute	<p>*PBS rams using LQ golf courses since 2007; ewes &amp; lambs since 2012.          *now at least 30 adult PBS &amp; this year 15 lambs on LQ golf courses          *BI supports an 8-ft. high chain-link fence similar to RM fence          * 7 known PBS deaths since Aug. 2012 associated with urban causes &amp; 1 illegal picking up of lamb which will now live in captivity = 8 instances of "take"          * number of other urban-related incidents          *increased disease of PBS in urban environments - intestinal parasites, low lamb recruitment, ingesting fertilizers, etc.          *Fence needed ASAP along Tradition, SilverRock, PGA West, Quarry so sheep don't work around to open areas. Fence should follow toe of slope so no habitat lost. Topography may require higher than 8 ft. No vegetation planted along fence to serve as an attractant to PBS.          *No other fence alternatives than above.          *If addl. water sources are added, should be in areas that won't attract PBS to urban areas.          *Electric fence = PBS have been strangled in single-wire fencing.          *RM fence materials have been proven safe for past 14 yrs.</p>			
42	3/7/16	CalFire	<p>*Required = gates at all trail head locations in accordance with LQ Municipal Code and/or RivCo Fire Dept. Fire Protection Standards.</p>			
43	3/28/16	Quarry Club (Law Office of Karen J. Sloat)	<p>*Club &amp; its members completely object to Project - risks property values, ill-advised, over broad, not based on current statistics or facts, not reasonable in scope of effect.</p>			

44	3/28/16	Kendale Trahan (General Manager at The Quarry)		* 307 members of the Quarry Golf Club are opposed to fence surrounding the property.
45	2/26/16	SCAQMD		*Must send DEIR + all appendices or technical docs relating to AQ & GHG analysis + electronic versions of all AQ modeling & health risk assessment files (not Adobe PDF files...read letter for more details)*Must analyze construction & operational impacts, regional & LSTs, compare to significance thresholds, see guidance on siting incompatible land uses, provide all feasible mitigation measures (see letter for available resources).
46	3/22/16	Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians		* project is outside existing reservation * project IS WITHIN bounds of Tribal Traditional Use Areas *No specific concerns, but please continue to consult with concerned parties *we request an approved Native American Monitor be present during ground disturbing activities, including surveys & archaeological testing. *Please contact Torres Martinez Indians who are closer in proximity to project.
47	3/7/16	Tradition Golf Club (David Della Penta, President)		*Chain link fence is aesthetically impoverished & will be opposed by TCA & residents *Proposed route adjacent to residences will be condemned by Club & residents *We would consider the following mitigating factors: rerouting the barrier on more direct route south of Club from LQ Cove placing watering tank & salt licks in remote parts of mountains south of Tradition using electric fence along route recommended above completely eliminating barriers within private property shown on CVCC's Fence Concept Plan to reduce need to acquire construction easements on private property, gain free access & possible cost sharing from conservation entities and fed. gov., Tradition will abide by 1997 ruling abating its participation in any financial obligations, & eliminate any public opposition to barrier *chain link fence will create barrier for rocks/debris during storms, creating flood & erosion hazards & possibly creating litigation in event of another 100-yr. storm

48	3/25/16	Sierra Club(Worden Williams LLP)	<p>*support overall purpose of project* project &amp; EIR must not be used as means for City, CVCC, existing developments to delay/avoid their obligation to construct fence*barrier fencing is already required mitigation for some projects that have undergone environ. review, including Quarry &amp; SilverRock* project must not be used as a vehicle to revisit a non-fencing alternative that has already been deemed infeasible and would be inconsistent with existing mitigation measures. Previous met. meas. &amp; CV MSHCP requirements have already narrowed the potential alternatives that can be considered. The IS sounds like project is a feasibility study ("other methods, alternatives, alternative alignments") rather than project to reduce sheep mortality. Wildlife agency letter of 2/24/14 stated "we're not aware of any functional equivalents to fencing at this time." *fence should be at lowest elevation possible but no higher than toe of slope, should not encroach further into sheep habitat above toe of slope*fence should be high enough to prevent sheep from crossing it*fence should be chain link or wrought iron... *vegetation near barrier - evaluate if will attract PBS or be cover for predators</p>
49	3/28/16	USFWS (Jenness McBride)	<p>*DEIR should clarify the regulatory status of CV MSHCP's requiring construction of barrier if PBS are using artificial sources of food/water...</p> <p>*DEIR should describe regulatory background of project as it relates to ESA (definition of "take", process used to analyze take) &amp; CV MSHCP's adaptive management measure (fence)</p> <p>* project mitigation could include design measures, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>visual - ornamental fence features, unobtrusive paint colors</li> <li>geo/hydro - bottom flap gates</li> <li>emergency access &amp; recreation - self-closing pedestrian gates at intervals</li> </ul> <p>These should be included in upfront project description to eliminate need for them to be addl. mitigation. Fence requirement is itself a mitigation measure of the CV MSHCP.</p> <p>* Re: fence interfering w/movement of other species," DEIR should clarify that urban dev. in project area has already destroyed/disrupted movement patterns between mntns &amp; valley, therefore we believe this is a less than signif impact.</p> <p>* Project will not conflict with CV MSHCP or PBS Recovery Plan; "no impact."</p>

**Scoping Meeting Notes: Verbal Comments/Questions  
CVCC Bighorn Sheep**

- C/Q) Concerns that the meeting notice was not listed in the paper soon enough. Many saw the notice for the first time day of the meeting.  
A. The meeting notice was published in the paper February 25<sup>th</sup> (Thursday) and posted on the City's website.
- C/Q) How do you stop/capture bighorn sheep to tag them?  
A. Tracked by helicopters, net guns for capture.
- C/Q) Is the bighorn sheep population going up or down? Concerns that newspapers are reporting that sheep populations are going up.  
A. The Newspapers are reporting on the Rancho Mirage area population of bighorn, not the La Quinta area.
- C/Q) PGA West: Can PGA West start a petition?  
A. PGA West has the right to start a petition, however the purpose of the scoping meeting was to learn about public concerns so the project team/City can address these issues in the environmental document.
- C/Q) The sheep may be getting diseases, but they are not getting the disease from humans (cannot be transmitted between different species). Therefore the commenter believes the argument that "fencing" out the sheep would reduce disease is invalid.
- C/Q) An article in the newspaper citing Department of Fish and Wildlife states that there were 22 sheep in 1998 and now there are 90 sheep today.  
A. Katie added that the numbers are deceiving and they do not show trends of disease, car accidents etc. May want to determine which population of sheep this article is referencing. It may be referencing the Rancho Mirage population, which may have increased due to implantation of the fence/barrier.
- C/Q) Is the proposed fence/barrier a mandate or voluntary?
- C/Q) The sheep are coming to the golf courses for water, wouldn't the fix (fencing them out) be worse than the problem (population decline)? How else will they get water?
- C/Q) Is the City of La Quinta only required to find a solution for the Silver Rock area? Does the CVCC have authority over the quarry, PGA West, and Tradition?
- C/Q) What authority says a fence must be installed?
- C/Q) Silver Rock made a development agreement to build the fence under certain conditions, however PGA West, the quarry, and Tradition did not make the same agreement.

- C/Q) Randall Shelley from PGA West: An increase from 20 sheep to 90 sheep is a good sign. "Don't fix what ain't broke."
- C/Q) Is it possible for land managers (or the appropriate party) to look into the use of land guzzlers/artificial water sources and other means to draw the sheep away from the golf courses?
- C/Q) Data should be collected before trying to find a solution, especially since they are only trying to meet a deadline. What is the deadline for? Who is the deadline for?
- A. Initiating of the deadline began after notification that sheep have been sighted in areas delineated by the MSHCP.
- C/Q) Richard from Rancho Mirage: Attended CVCC meeting in January where they said all lambs/majority born in 2015 have died. However Richard has recent pictures of lambs. Is the CVCC reporting correctly?
- C/Q) Emails emerged from Heather (check last name) to Ben Gonzales that discussed the situation at Silver Rock. Ben believed taking action was premature. (Check referenced email).
- C/Q) Has the Mayor received notification from anyone? (Regarding the PBS sightings/potential issues).
- A. No, however standard monitoring data was collected in 2014.
- C/Q) Lambs need grass during early stages of development, therefore access to the golf courses is important.

## **ATTACHMENT 2**

Community Public Scoping Meeting Photos and Material (i.e. copies of  
sign-in sheets and power point presentations)

La Quinta Peninsular Bighorn Sheep Barrier  
Community Public Scoping Meeting  
March 10, 2016



## La Quinta Peninsular Bighorn Sheep Barrier

## Public Scoping Meeting

Sign-In Sheet  
La Quinta, CA  
3/10/2016

NAME	ADDRESS	PHONE	EMAIL
Glenn L. Cobby	55365 K. Vista	760-657-8571	glenn.l.cobby@gmail.com
Jenness McBride	777 E Tahquamenon Calm Springs	760-322-2070	jenness_mcbride@fws.gov
Marie Borchard	74275 Goleta Ave	760-834-8684	mborchard@yahoo.com
David T. De la Parra	53840 Del Catin Dr.	760-771-6203	DavidCDeLaParra.com, PHILIP@
Phil. P. Betterence	74-730 Ranchito Grande Dr	949-720-0070	BETTERENCE@TPUSLS.COM





## Public Scoping Meeting

## Sign-In Sheet

**La Quinta, CA**

3/10/2016

[illegible]



# La Quinta Peninsular Bighorn Sheep Barrier

## Public Scoping Meeting

Sign-In Sheet  
La Quinta, CA  
3/10/2016

NAME	ADDRESS	PHONE	EMAIL
Don / Penni Sturgill	La Quinta, CA 57605 Ballybunion	206.852.9833	dsssturgill@verizon.net
Richard W. Kite	71205 Thunderbird RD	760.770.9444	
Jim Foote	1201 Bird Center DR PS 92262	760.833-7136	JFOOTE@BLM.GOV
Marcus Nelson	51000 Hwy 74 P.O. CA 92260	507-626-0522	
Kendala Trohan	La Quinta 46175 Roudel Ln.		
Rob Ullrich	55661 Rivera CA	907-1386	rob@ulrichna.com
Matthew Nelson	79732 Olympia FIELDS LA QUINTA, CA	766 2853336	MATTEO9@DC.RE.COM.
Amie Byard	Bighorn Institute P.O. Box 262 P.D., CA 92261	760-346-7334	bi@bighorninstitute.org



CVCC

## La Quinta Peninsular Bighorn Sheep Barrier

## Public Scoping Meeting

Sign-In Sheet  
La Quinta, CA  
3/10/2016

NAME	ADDRESS	PHONE	EMAIL
Paula Stewart	79980 MERION LA QUINTA	925 997-3661	rstew14@verizon.net
ROBERT RADI	54175 AVENIDA HERERA, LA QUINTA		rradi@la-quinta.org
Pat Miller	La Quinta 80740 Ziskroff	(760) 564-1315	rich.pat@barnes@ hotmail.com
Susan Jacoy	78196 Calle Norte La Q 92253		Susan-Jacoy, 24@gmail.com
Kathleen Shelley	57 630 Interlachen La Quinta		Kathleen.shelley@gmail.com
Randall Shelley	"		"



## Public Scoping Meeting

**La Quinta, CA**

3/10/2016

[illegible]





CVCC

## La Quinta Peninsular Bighorn Sheep Barrier

## Public Scoping Meeting

Sign-In Sheet

La Quinta, CA

3/10/2016

NAME	ADDRESS	PHONE	EMAIL
Steeny Banks	The Point Sun		
Kim Richards	50120 Malaga LP 92253	949 422-7054	Kim@Kuker200.com
FRANK SPENAREK	CITY OF LA		
GARY & PHYLLIS DOLENGA	LAQUINTA	760-564-4794	GDOLENGA@OC.RR. CA
Bert & Diangrudig	PGA West	5414303635	bertbrundige@gmail.com



# La Quinta Peninsular Bighorn Sheep Barrier

## Public Scoping Meeting

Sign-In Sheet  
La Quinta, CA  
3/10/2016

NAME	ADDRESS	PHONE	EMAIL
Helene Nowak	44830 FRONTERRA DR L.Q	760 423-6563	HNOV4K2@DE.RR.COM
Rosalyn Insprucker	54-591 Riviera LQ	760- 771-2048	Roedie@AOL.COM
Richard Olson	54591 Riviera La Quinta, CA 92253	760-771-2048	1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1
Anne Cheung	55670 Riviera La Quinta CA 92253	760-285-6337	4aycheung@gmail.com
Sharon Stegmuller	55885 Congressional LQ CA 92253	570-368-0733	sharonstegmuller@ gmail.com
Shirley Stegmuller	55574 Riviera LQ CA 92253	760-726- 3052	stegmuller@ gmail.com
Kelly McGalliard	78456 VIA PAVION LA QUINTA CA	760-774-5596	Kellymcp@pgawest.org
MICHAEL WALKER	54-320 Southern Hills LA QUINTA CA 92253	760-861-8308	MIKEW@PGAWEST.ORG
BLAINE CARLAN	78-725 STARRLIGHT CN BENMUNO DUNES, CA 92203	760 275-3327	GRAPES@DESERT FRESH.COM
Richard Wood	PO Box 1575 PD 92261	760 641- 7910	richrjwood@gmail



## Public Scoping Meeting

# La Quinta, CA

3/10/2016

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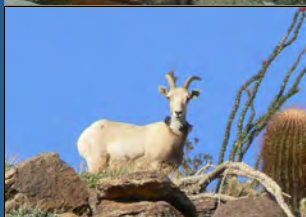
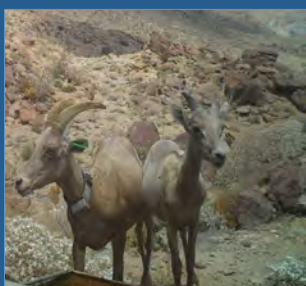
**Update:**  
**Environmental Analysis of Potential Alternatives for a  
 Barrier to Bighorn Sheep in La Quinta**



**La Quinta City Council**  
 March 1, 2016



## Sheep Tracking



**Sheep Tracking:**

- Collars with Solar GPS "pod"
- Provides "sheep track"

*2014 - La Quinta Cove Area*

- 9 ewes fitted with radiocollars
- 11 ewes/1 ram – samples collected

*2015 – Martinez Canyon to Lake Cahuilla*

- 12 ewes fitted with radiocollars





## Sheep Tracking



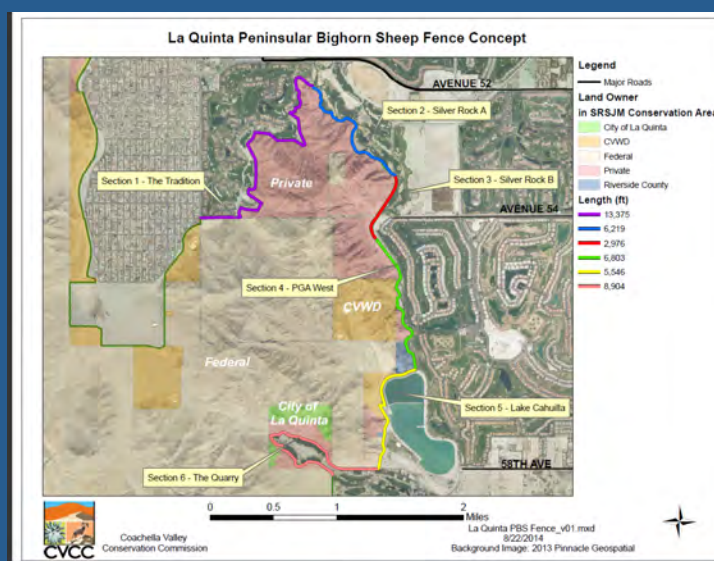
## What is Required?



"If the USFWS or CDFG provides written notice to the CVCC or Local Permittee that Peninsular bighorn sheep are using artificial sources of food or water in unfenced areas of existing urban Development within or near a Conservation Area, the CVCC (unless otherwise agreed to by the applicable Local Permittee) shall cause to be constructed a barrier to sheep access to cure the problem within 2 years of such notice. The location of this barrier (i.e., an 8-foot fence or functional equivalent) shall be determined by CVCC based on its ability to obtain permission/access to the necessary lands. If placement of a barrier must occur on other public lands (e.g., BLM, CDFG), CVCC will coordinate with these other agencies as appropriate."

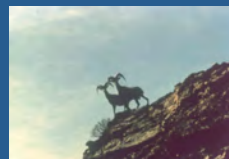
Section 8.2.4.1 of CVMSHCP

## Looking for Solutions!



## La Quinta Project Schedule

- ✓ Community Outreach – fall/winter 2015/16
- ✓ Scoping Meeting – March 10, 2016 – 7 pm
- ✓ Environmental Analysis – January to May 2016
- ✓ Draft EIR - Public comments – 45 days – July 2016
- ✓ Final Environmental document – fall 2016
- ✓ Project implementation – fall 2016 and beyond



## Questions?



## **Coachella Valley Conservation Commission Public Scoping Meeting**

### **La Quinta Peninsular Bighorn Sheep Barrier Environmental Impact Report**



**Thursday, March 10, 2016 at 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.  
La Quinta Chamber of Commerce  
78-495 Calle Tampico, La Quinta CA 92253**

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## **Public Scoping Meeting Agenda**

- **Introductions**
- **Purpose of Scoping Meeting**
- **Description of the Project**
- **CEQA & NEPA Process**
- **Timeline For the CEQA & NEPA Process**
- **Environmental Impact Report (EIR)**
- **EIR Environmental Issues And Analysis**
- **Key Topics Evaluated in EIR**
- **Conclusions**



**Comments On Scope Of EIR  
Comments and Questions**

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## Introductions

### **Coachella Valley Conservation Commission**

*Katie Barrows*

### **Terra Nova Planning & Research Inc.**

*John Criste, Andrea Randall, Kelly Clark, & Khadija Nadimi*



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## Purpose of Scoping Meeting

- Presentation on the project overview
- Inform the public, resource agencies, and interested parties about the proposed project
  - Display boards
  - Ppt presentation
  - Maps and aerals
- Help to determine scope and content of the Environmental Impact Report
- Staff information stations
  - Record questions and comments from audience
  - Record on comment cards



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## La Quinta Peninsular Bighorn Sheep

- PBS are listed as: Endangered under the federal Endangered Species Act
- PBS are listed as: Threatened under the California Endangered Species Act
- Fully protected species in California
- Covered species under the Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP)
- Protection also subject to the 2000 Peninsular Bighorn Sheep Recovery Plan



PBS at SilverRock Resort & PGA West

## Project Objectives

Reduce the risk of loss of Peninsular Bighorn Sheep

Project implementation will allow CVCC to prevent continuing impacts to sheep from urban-based threats adjoining sheep habitat



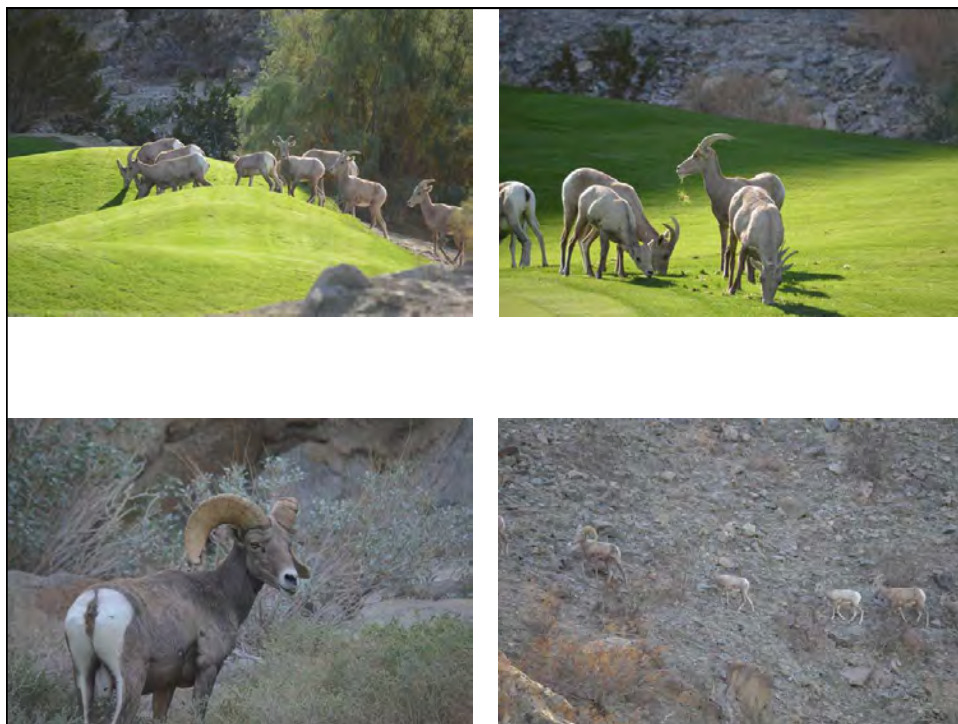
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## Description of the Project

- Construct a 9.5± mile sheep barrier along the urban-mountain interface
- from the Quarry Golf Club, north along Lake Cahuilla County Park and the PGA West development, then northwest along the SilverRock golf and west and south along the foothills of the Tradition Golf Club
- An effective barrier to prevent PBS access to urbanized areas

**CVWD Sheep Fence  
Constructed in 2014**

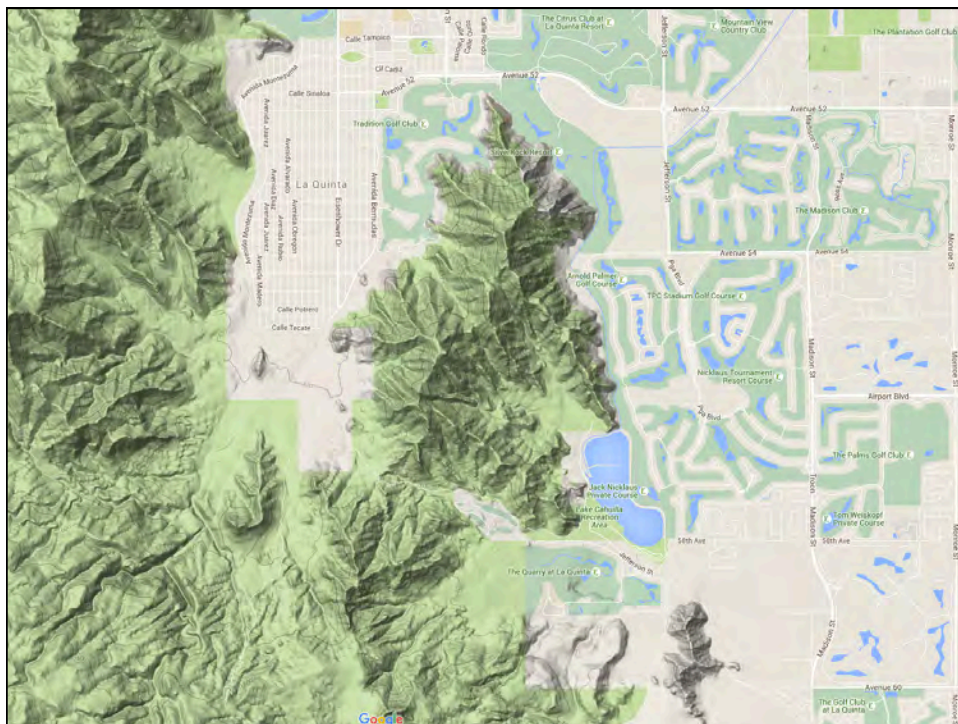




## Project's Anticipated Timeframe

- CEQA & NEPA Clearance
  - September 2016
- Construction
  - Spring 2017





## CEQA Process

- CEQA = California Environmental Quality Act
- Required for all proposed actions determined to be a Project under CEQA
- Includes studies & analysis to determine potential environmental effects
- Identifies project alternatives that can reduce significant impacts
- Identifies mitigation measures to avoid, reduce, or lessen effects

### CEQA Requirements

- Requires government entities to study and disclose the effects on the environment of the decisions they make
- Includes both “process” and “content” requirements
- Is implemented by Lead Agencies, in this case CVCC





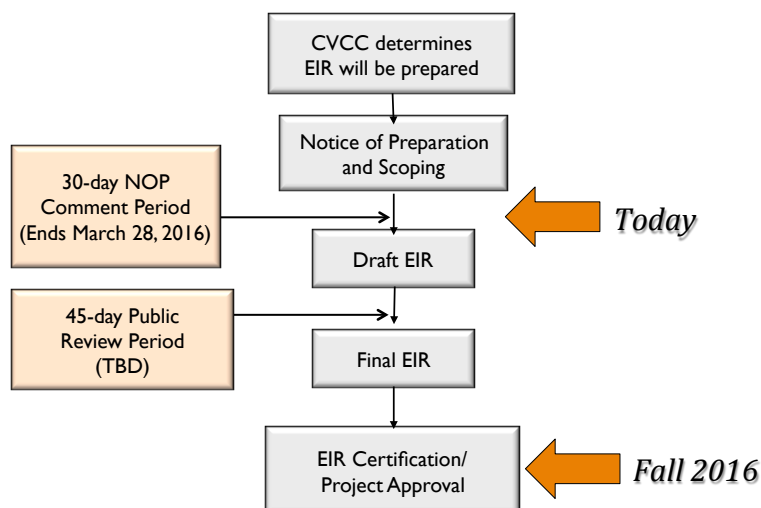
## CVCC CEQA Role In La Quinta Peninsular Bighorn Sheep Barrier

- CVCC is Lead Agency under CEQA and will carry out the environmental review process
- CVCC has determined an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) should be prepared for the project
- Environmental planning consulting assistance engaged
- Initiate the CEQA process with public scoping
- Identify and analyse feasible alternative methods and/or facilities that provide an effective barrier between sheep and the urban interface



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### La Quinta Peninsular Bighorn Sheep Barrier CEQA Process





## NEPA Process

### NEPA Lead Agency: US Bureau of Reclamation

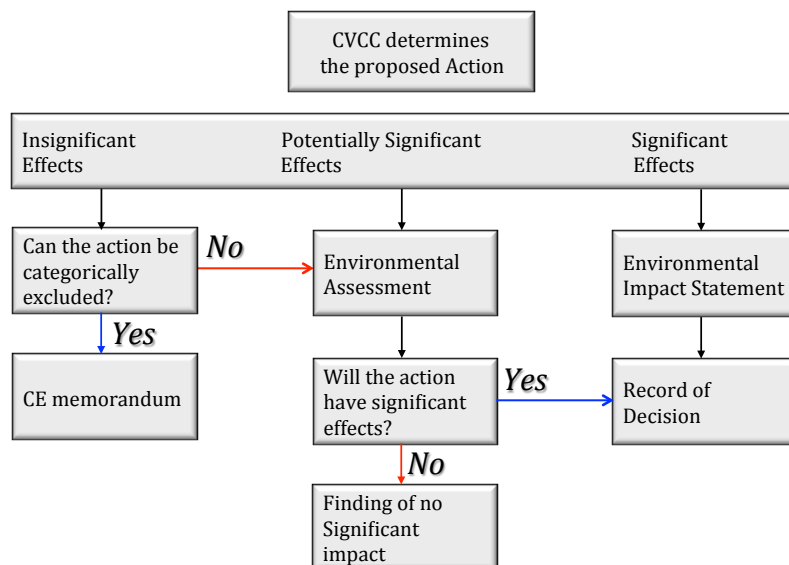
- NEPA = National Environmental Policy Act
- NEPA required when a Project has Federal funding, affects Federal lands or facilities, or requires a Federal permit
- The USBR has determined that an Environmental Assessment (EA)
- should be prepared for this project
- Comments received during the 30-day NOP comment period and this scoping meeting will be shared with and considered by the USBR



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## La Quinta Peninsular Bighorn Sheep Barrier

### NEPA Process



## Comment on Scope & Content of EIR

- Oral comments and comment cards accepted at tonight's meeting
- Written comments accepted through **March 28, 2016 at 5:00 PM**
- CVCC will consider all comments in preparing Draft EIR
- All comments will be assembled in Scoping Report and included in EIR



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## Purpose of an Environmental Impact Report

- Disclose the environmental effects of a proposed project
- Identify mitigation measures to avoid, reduce, minimize significant environmental effects
- Evaluate reasonable alternatives
- Provide opportunity for public participation in the CEQA process



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## Key Topics Evaluated In EIR

- EIR will evaluate both short term (temporary) construction impacts and long-term operational impacts
- All CEQA-required resource topics will be addressed
- Potential temporary and permanent project impacts include:
  - Noise
  - Air quality
  - Biological Resources
  - Cultural Resources
  - Visual/aesthetics
  - Recreational Resources
  - Air quality and energy use
  - Other CEQA-required topics (e.g., growth inducement, alternatives, cumulative impacts, etc.)



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## Conclusions



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## Public Scoping Period

**February 25, 2016 – March 28, 2016**

**CVCC is seeking your input in determining the scope of environmental topics to be discussed in the EIR.**

**CEQA requires a 30-day scoping period**



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## Public Scoping Period

**Oral comments and written comment cards accepted at tonight's meeting & through Wednesday December 23, 2015**

**Coachella Valley Conservation Commission**

73-710 Fred Waring Drive, Suite 200  
Palm Desert, California 92260

**Email: [kbarrows@cvag.org](mailto:kbarrows@cvag.org)**



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**For More Information:**

<https://www.cvag.org>

**Comments and Questions!**



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**THANK YOU!**



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